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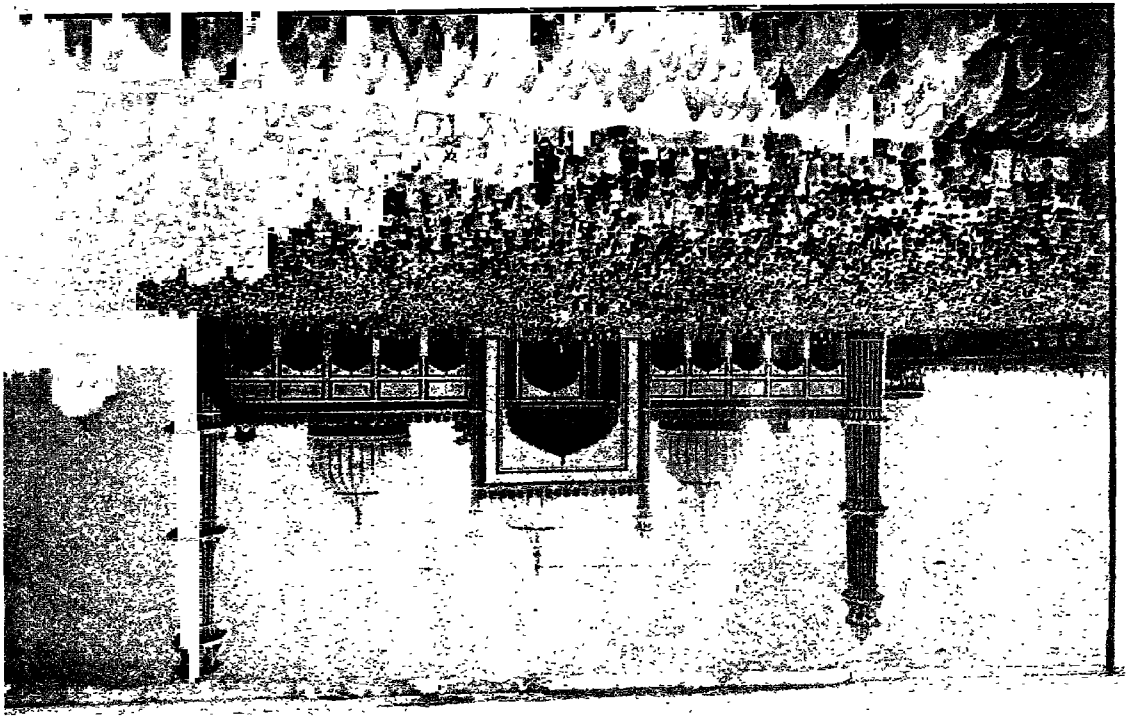
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Solitary Prayer To face page 55

When prayer time overtakes a Muslim at a distance from a mosque.



HISTORY

OF

JAMA MASJID

AND

INTERPRETATION

OF

MUSLIM DEVOTIONS

BY

AZIZ-UR-RAHMAN

Instructor of Oriental Languages

Officially recommended in the Gazette of India as a thoroughly competent teacher.

Author of

Modern Hindustani Teacher, Simple Hindustani

and

The Urdu Conversational Exercises., etc

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INTRODUCTORY FOREWARD.

I often see numbers of European visitors and American tourists coming to the Jama Masjid (Grand Mosque) at Delhi, either on a sight-seeing expedition to look at its marvellous structure, or out of curiosity to watch the Muslim congregation at prayer on Fridays.

It often strikes me, that without comprehending the meaning or object of the various postures adopted by the worshippers during the prayer, they may consider them strange, if not ridiculous. It has been in an endeavour to gratify their curiosity, that I have ventured to write this book, in which I have tried to explain the important points as detailed below:—

Part 1. Gives a full description of the structure of the mosque in question, with an explanation of the purposes, for which the various portions were designed, as, for instance, the recessed arch, the western aisle, the nave, the pulpit, the Mukabbar, the cloisters, the minarets, the ablutionary tank and so on.

Part 2. Gives a translation of the text of the Muslim prayer, and the method of saying it, with the explanation of the various postures adopted by the congregation during the recital as a token of their humiliation and homage to the Almighty.

I think it is possible that a careful study of the above mentioned points may appeal to a great number of visitors and that it may lead to a wider comprehension of the Muslim ceremonial, thus adding additional interest to the visit, for "to seek merit and enjoy it, is of itself a merit."

In my early days, I read in my lesson book about "eyes or no eyes", which luckily opened my own eyes and gave me a never forgotten desire to make a careful study of everything of note.

Let us remember the simple but instructive little story of the two boys, who, on a Saturday afternoon, went for a walk along the river side. One of the boys took no special interest in anything and only glanced carelessly at the various wayside objects he happened to come across, returning home tired and none the wiser for his expedition.

"A primose by a river's brim
A yellow primose to him
And it was nothing more."

Wordsworth.

The other boy, however, searched diligently for objects of interest and made a careful study of every thing he saw, and thus made his excursion an instructive success as well as an amusement to himself.

"And this our life exempt from public haunt
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing."

Shakespear.

I gladly seize the present opportunity to offer my best acknowledgements to Mrs. Brooke (wife of Major-General G. F. H. Brooke) for her kind and most valuable literary aid by going through the manuscript of this book. She took a keen interest in the subject of the production, and gave a diligent attention to the fidelity and veracity of the English phraseology and the choice of words. I cannot find enough words to express my esteem of this kind-hearted lady.

AZIZ UR RAHMAN,

March 1936.

Kalan Mahal,
Delhi, India.

"While acknowledging with much appreciation the kind words of professor Aziz Ur Rahman I would like to express my own admiration for the immense amount of diligent study that he has devoted to this little book.

The interpretation of the Muslim ceremony of prayer should be of definite interest to English speaking people resident in countries where Islam is one of the principle religions and the History and the carefully prepared description of the various (to us) mysteries of the mosque

Jama Masjid have not only absorbed several years of study and literary effort on the part of the professor, but have produced many delightful translations from ancient Persian inscriptions which hitherto have not been available for those interested.

I would like to add, in response to his kind reference to the very small assistance I have rendered with regard to the "veracity of his English phraseology", I have been particularly careful only to make the smallest possible alterations in the text in every instance where I considered they would contribute to the instructive interest of his own words.

The professor's rendering of all he holds in such veneration and his life long admiration of the mosque are far better expressed in his own phraseology than would be the case if the information he is so anxious to convey were inscribed in the words of any person scrupulously editing and revising his original M. S. S. The essence of his personal appreciation and of his carefully expressed explanations would be lost, and the beauty and simplicity of much of his rendering of the tenets of his religion would loose very definite value in another's hand.

(Sd.) DOROTHY E. BROOKE

Mrs. Geoffrey Brooke

INTRODUCTION.

(JAMA MASJID)

From earliest times, it has been the custom of all nations and religions to erect individual buildings as places of worship. The genius and the diligence devoted in honour of such places, demonstrate the love and veneration for the deity to whose worship the edifice is dedicated.

"In the elder days of Art
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part
For the Gods see every where." *Longfellow.*

Many such buildings, on account of their religious interest, become fabrics of public concern, and consequently are scrupulously cared for and preserved by succeeding generations, thus handing down to posterity the historical events of the time when they were constructed, and the traditions connected with their founders. This interest will be maintained for as long as the ruins of such buildings remain, although they have suffered exposure to weather together with the passage of time, and the bitter experience of the vicissitudes of political and religious strife.

Therefore to obtain the best impression of the history of any country, it is advisible first of all to acquire a good knowledge of its religion, because both political and religious history march together in prosperity and suffer equally in adversity.

The temples, the mosques and the churches are thus invaluable text books of History, and tombs of the once mighty Emperors are of inestimable value to the students of the times in which these great persons lived.

These great tombs, by their embellishments and by their grandeur, demonstrate the glory and the magnificence of their founders, and by their wreckage and decay evince the helplessness and impotency of the interred remains of these mighty kings—once so majestic and despotic.

In all India there is no building of more historical and religious interest than the great mosque of Delhi, its capital and the museum of Archæological buildings of both Muslim and Hindus.

This great mosque of Jama Masjid, with its noble structure, its picturesque appearance, its majestic aspect, and its imposing outlines, together with its symmetrical beauty of proportion in spite of the vastness of its size, is embellished within and without with consumate artistry and carvings, surpassing all description. The beauty of the work devoted to its erection and the architectural splendour of this mosque gives us a vivid realisation of the aesthetics of the people and the culture of the time in which it was built.

Furthermore it powerfully demonstrates the majestic dignity, pious devotion, and religious fervour of the great founder, the Emperor Shahjahan, then the King of Delhi and Emperor of India. He had a natural taste and interest in buildings, and has bequeathed to India several marvellous structures erected to his ever fresh and glorious memory.

"He builded better than he knew
The conscious stone to beauty grew." *Emerson.*

AZIZ UR RAHMAN.

PART I

JAMI MASJID.

The site for the Jami Masjid was very wisely chosen, being only a 1000 yards from the fort, which was also built by the same King (Shah Jahan) and these two magnificent buildings each enhance the splendour of the other.

Jami Masjid was erected on an elevation which went by the name of 'Bhujla Pahari', and which afforded an excellent site, but is now scarcely discernable under the enormous structure of the mosque itself. Nevertheless the gradual rise in the gradient of all the roads of approach and the fact that the roofs of the highest houses in the city are level with its floor, demonstrate the elevation of its position, which also renders it visible from long distances around Delhi. Thus is this beautiful mosque not only a place of worship, but serves in addition, as a highly valued land mark.

Householders in the South-west vicinity are very concerned by the present rumour that there is a government project under consideration, contemplating connecting it with the Government Secretariats by means of a straight road carried through a large number of houses.

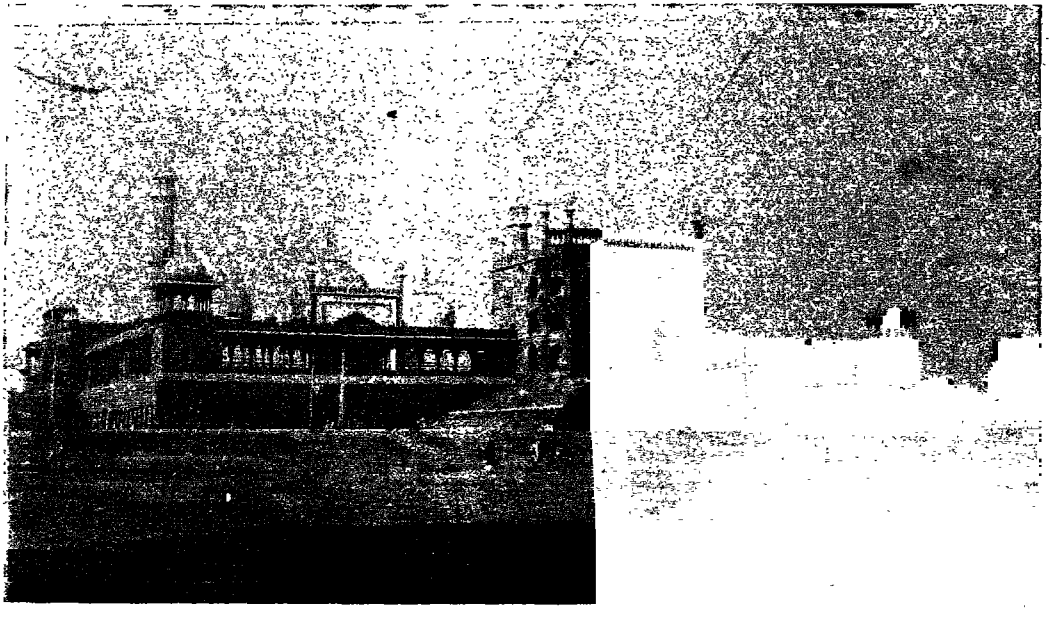
The mosque possésses two names, one of which is 'Masjid-i-Jahan Numa', 'Jahan' meaning 'world' and 'Numa'-visible. These two words confirming its elevation, *i. e.*—figuratively commanding a view of the whole world.

The second name 'Jami-Masjid' literally translated means 'collective or congregational mosque.' The populace call it 'Juma Masjid'—Friday Mosque, a singularly appropriate name as, in addition to its being the principle mosque in Delhi, the general congregational prayer is held here every Juma—a Friday.

On the date of the laying of the foundation stone, Friday the 10th of Shawwal 1060 A. H. (corresponding to the 6th of October 1650 A. D.) the nobles and great ones of the land, the rich and the poor, and the great church dignitaries were assembled. The Emperor himself attending in person. He offered the honour of laying the foundation stone to any Muslim who had on no single occasion missed his midnight (voluntary) prayer, or the first 'Takbir' in a congregation prayer. As nobody accepted this offer, the King himself stepped forward to lay the stone, at the same time, modestly expressing his regret for thus disclosing his secret personal adherence to his devotions.

The construction of the mosque was commenced under the direct supervision of Sadullah Khan, then Prime Minister, and Fazil Khan, Khansaman, comptroller of the King's household, ably assisted by numerous keenly interested nobles and others of all ranks, who devoted unlimited attention to superintending those details of the construction entrusted to them.

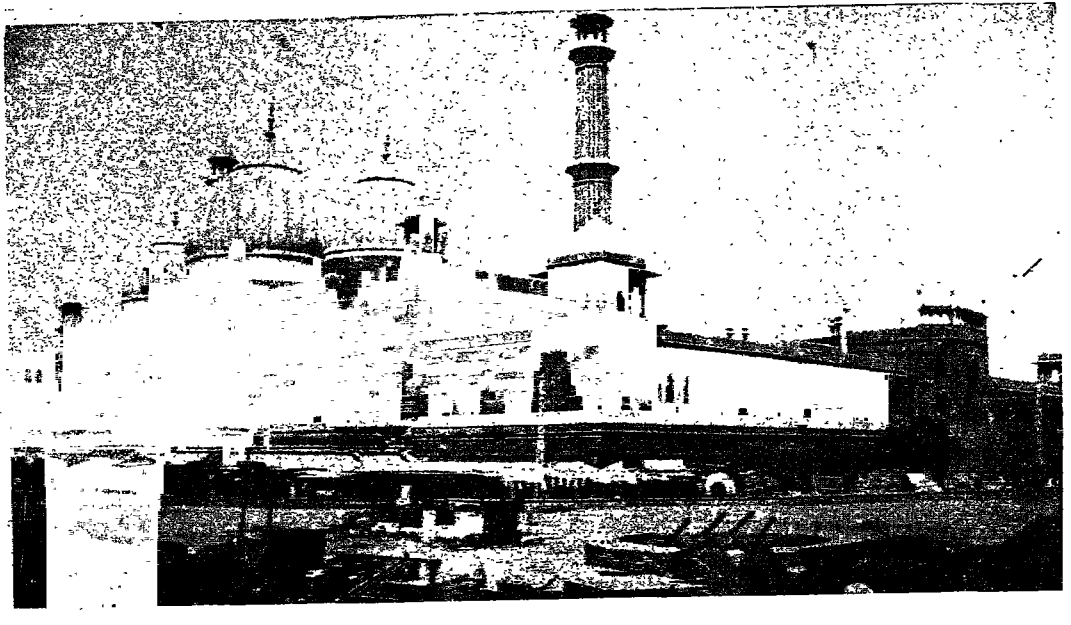
Expert workmen, specialists in every department of the craftmanships required for the construction of the mosque, were assembled from far and wide—not only from India itself—but from Arabia, Persia, Turkestan and Europe.



THE JAMI MASJID—Delhi

"General view"

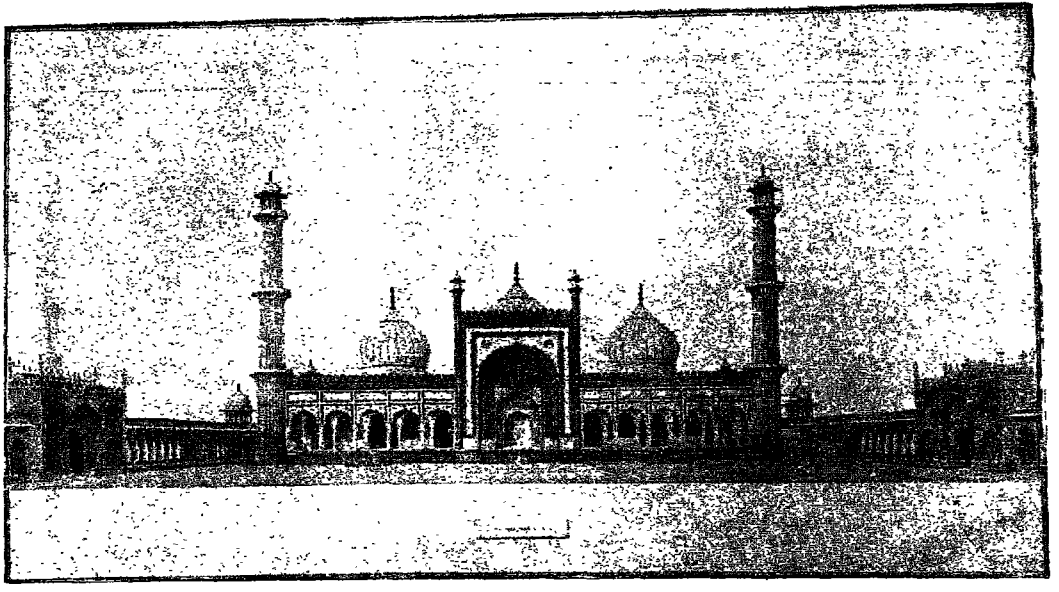
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THE JAMI MASJID—Delhi

"Showing the Back Wall"

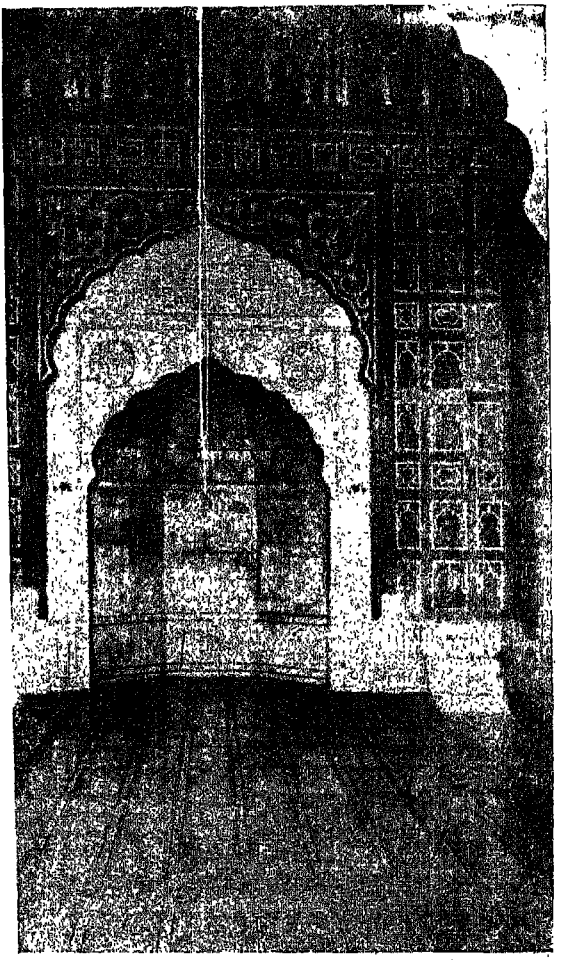
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THE JAMI MASJID — Praying Chambers

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THE SANCTUARY

Showing nave, central arch, and the pulpit

To face page 11

Five thousand workmen are said to have laboured every day for six years, before the mosque was completed.

The stability of the structure is probably due to the workmen having been lavishly remunerated by their employers, and thus induced to employ to the fullest extent their genius, initiative and skill in producing the perfection that was achieved. In spite of the fact that there are many people nowadays, who are great lovers of art, there are alas, few substantial patrons; which accounts to a large extent for the decline in the standard of certain of the ancient arts and crafts. In addition to the above reason, in these fast moving times, the fact that much of the work is hastily executed is also responsible for the inferiority of the workmanship.

The cost of building this mosque is supposed to have been Rs. 1,000,000 or ten lacs of rupees. This sum does not include the incalculable value of the marble and innumerable varieties of stone, precious and otherwise, presented by the ruling chiefs from the quarries in their territories.

The back wall of every mosque in the East is laid from North to South, and is so placed that its actual centre lies at right angles to the Kaaba (the temple at Mecca), towards which all faces are turned during prayer. The direction of this central point of the wall is determined in accordance with the position of the polar star.

The strict observance of this direction often adds considerable difficulties to the selection of a site for a mosque, resulting in many cases, in the building being

erected at a different angle of alignment to the houses in its immediate neighbourhood. In addition much ground is wasted at each corner, as the entire structure of the mosque depends on the lie of the Western wall.

Before giving a detailed description of the various parts of the Jami Masjid, the following list of the essential portions of the building may be of interest :—

1. Mosque proper, this includes the praying chambers and the aisle.

2. The Nave.

3. Recessed Arch in the nave.

4. The Pulpit, situated in the nave and close to the arch on the right hand side.

5. Open courtyard, the Indian climate necessitating the performance of prayers in the open, during the hot weather.

6. A well to supply the water for ablutions. In cities with a regular water supply, these wells are giving way to taps.

7. A bath room.

8. Reservoir or ablutionary tanks—In small mosques spouted vessels are employed for ablution, but larger mosques possess reservoirs—which are preferable, both for the saving of time and the general convenience of worshippers.

9. Entrance:—A mosque is very seldom entered on the Western side, because as far as possible the available space on that side is utilized by the praying chambers.

10. The minarets are designed with the view of obtaining from such heights the largest possible radius for the Moazzan's Voice, when crying the Azan, or the 'call to prayer.'

The mosque proper (*i.e.* the praying chambers) is 200 feet long and 120 feet wide, and is raised four feet from the level of the courtyard, from which it is approached by three flighted stairs gracefully situated at the central entrances. It is divided into two aisles—inner and outer—which run parallel, in cloisters, to the western wall. Both the aisles have arches at their extreme ends which open on to the side courtyards with flights of stairs.

The inner aisle is the more important of the two, because this aisle contains the nave, the central recessed arch and the pulpit. It runs from end to end of the building and is interspersed with cross-way arches, (unlike the outer aisle) which support the tremendous weight of the three enormous cupolas.

The nave is situated directly under the centre of the middle dome, and is thus ceilinged by the beautiful and lofty roof, which in addition to enhancing its grandeur, enables the recitation of the prayer by the Imam to be audible, yet unechoed, at a long range. Except for the

central recessed arch, which is lined with marble, and the walls, which are encased with the same material to a height of four feet, the sides and the ceiling of the nave are of red stone, with plainly designed panels inlaid with white marble lines, giving it a very serene appearance.

The Imam when leading a liturgical prayer, stands in front of the congregation in the recessed arch designed for this purpose—and which is situated exactly in the centre of the western wall.

This central niche in the Jami-Masjid, as befits the importance of this mosque, is more spacious in size than is the case in mosques of smaller dimensions. In all mosques this niche represents the most sacred part of the building and receives in consequence lavish attention in its detail and decoration. The sacred niche, in the Jami-Masjid is lined throughout with white marble, which, shining like glass, is further embellished with delicate embossed tracery. In the centre, where the sides are moulded to the graceful curve which leads to its apex, the marble is so smoothly hewn, and the joins in the stone so carefully concealed that they are invisible to the naked eye—while the designs in tracery work become proportionately narrower culminating in a distinctive and beautiful ornamentation.

Above this again, two circulets, one on either side, demonstrate the repetition of "Ya Ghaffar"—"O Forgiver" these are inscribed and inlaid with black marble in monographical form.

Two verses, from the Quran, inlaid with mosaic stone on marble, which serve as additional ornamentation, proclaim the Divine clemency and forgiveness to sinners who return to God with sincere repentance, and call upon worshippers to perform their devotions only in the mosques which are founded by pious and holy men.

Over the centre is inscribed the universal Muslim text, "In the name of God the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful". This text is utilized at the commencement of every undertaking in any spheres of action, literature or correspondence in the Muslim community.

The translation of the text within the rectangle runs as follows:—

"O My servants who have transgressed against your own souls, despair *not of the Mercy of God, for God surely forgives all sins, for He is Merciful and Forgiving.

The second verse, divided into two halves, is inscribed on either side of the rectangle, as follows:—

"A mosque, founded on piety from its commencement, is verily deserving of your devotions. Therein are people who aspire to piety, and God loves those who purify themselves."

The inscription above gives us the following parable; –

One who was opposed to the prophet Mohammad once conferred secretly with others of like mind and planned

*"*Nil desperandum auspice deo.*"
With God's blessing never despair.

a hidden spot wherein he could initiate his profane activities against Mohammad, and as a result of this conspiracy a great mosque* was erected by these wicked men in the neighbourhood of the prophet's mosque at Medina. When it was completed, these hypocrites, with the view to gaining the confidence of Mohammad, asked him to perform the opening ceremony of their mosque by reciting the first congregational prayer. God, however, disclosed their designs to Mohammad and, forbidding him to accede to their hypocritical request, enjoined him to make it a rule that every Muslim must perform his devotions only in mosques founded on piety.

As the true Muslims would not, and the dissemblers had no desire, to pray in that mosque, it lay neglected and soon fell into ruins. Tradition tells us that smoke was seen rising from its foundations.

In every large mosque the pulpit (or Mimbar) is situated on the right of the above mentioned niche, and it is from this pulpit that the Imam delivers the *Khutba* or monser at the commencement of every Friday prayer, and at the end of the prayers of bi-enial festivals, called the "Eeds." In addition to exhorting the congregation to worship, the Imam calls blessings upon Mohammad and his descendants, and prays for long life and prosperity for the ruling sovereign, whose name is invariably mentioned in every sermon.

* "Wheresever God erects a house of prayer,
The Devil always builds a chapel there.
And 'twill be found upon examination
The latter has the largest congregation.
— De Foe

The pulpit is always designed with three steps, leading to a small platform, used as a seat for the Imam, which he rests on between the two parts of the sermon. Tradition tells us that Mohammad himself, when delivering his sermons stood on the topmost step. His successors or caliphs, holding it sacred to his memory, forbear from doing like wise, but Abu Bakr utilised the second, and Umar (once the sworn enemy of Mohammad) stood on the third. Usman, who was proverbially unassuming decided on the centre step from which all sermons are now delivered.

The pulpit in Jami Masjid is one of its especial beauties, being carved out of a single block of marble. The platform, with its marble net-work balustrade, rests on four supports each gracefully embossed with foliage.

Opposite each of the three open archways leading into the sides of the inner aisle, there are niches, recessed in the western wall. These arches are not essential to the actual construction, they are less deep than the central arch, in which the Imam stands, in order to be to the front of the worshippers. Nevertheless these arches are adorned with the same designs of the tracery work as the central arch.

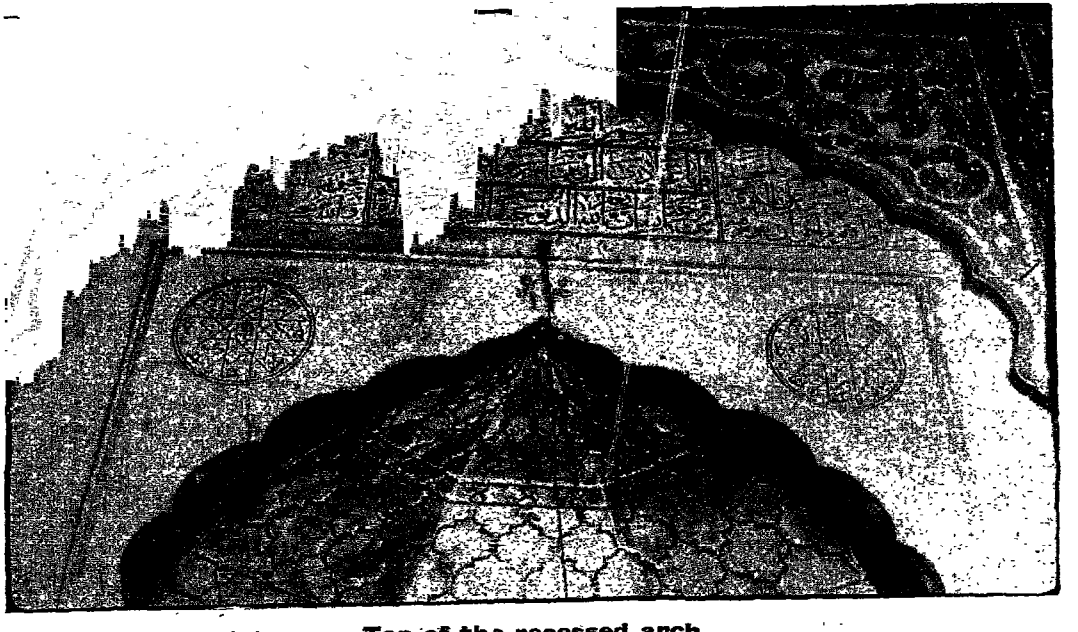
The outer aisle does not run from end to end, it is centrally divided by the side walls of the mighty middle arch, which is loftier than the other ten arches, five on each side and opening onto the courtyard.

This central archway leads into the nave, and is exactly opposite the central recessed alcove of the nave. It is flanked by two smaller minarets with lotus shaped tops

crowned with cupolas which are supported by pillars. The roof of the arch between these two minarets is crowned with a row of battlements, similar to those which adorns the length of the outer aisle. Thus by reason of its great height, the marble facings are further embellished by the minarets and battlements, and the whole appearance is both impressive and truly decorative—a fitting accompaniment to the entrance of the graceful nave—the sanctuary of the mosque.

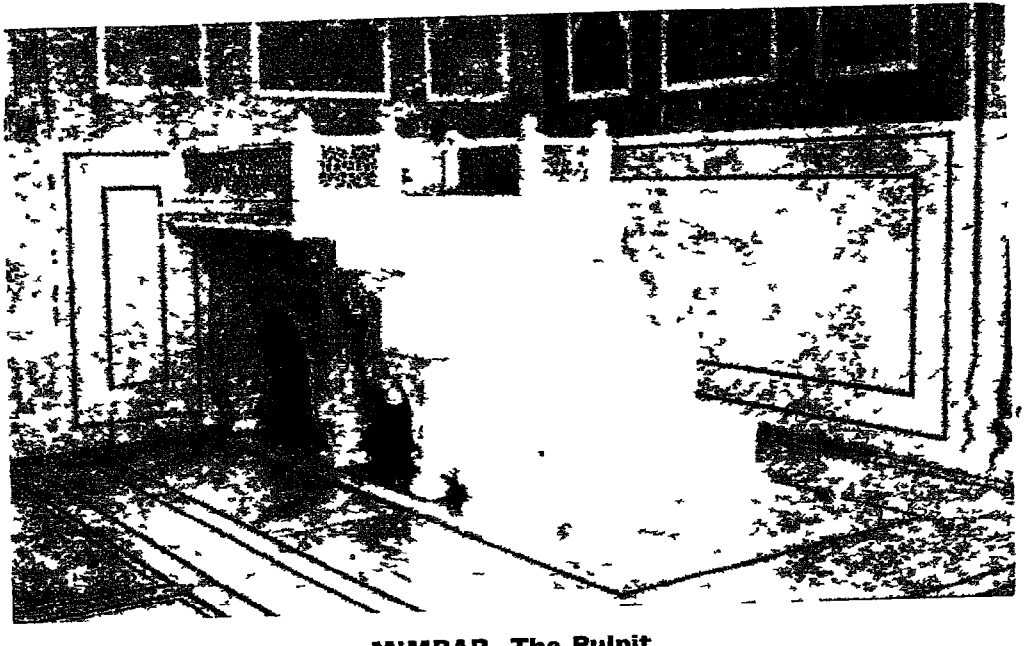
The roof of the mosque itself with its three great cupolas, the largest of which is in the centre, is a beautifully balanced structure. The outer surfaces of the cupolas are covered with white marble, inlaid with stripes of black. The majesty of these immense cupolas of gleaming white, surmounted by their glittering golden spires, contribute very largely to the stately and impressive appearance of the whole beautiful building.

The extreme ends of the outer aisle are flanked by slender and graceful minarets, which, with their flying buttresses, rise from the level of the courtyard to a height of 130 feet. These minarets are of red stone, striped vertically with inlaid white marble. At equal intervals they are provided with three projecting galleries, the topmost of which is crowned with a marble canopy, supported by pillars of the same material. One hundred and thirty spiral steps lead to the tops of the minarets. As has been previously explained, these minarets in smaller and low levelled mosques were destined to secure an elevation in order to increase the range of the "call to prayer."



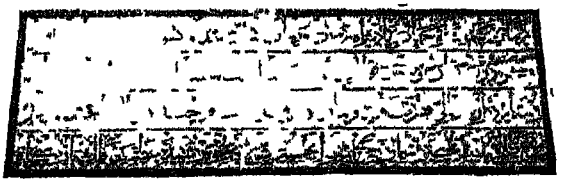
Top of the recessed arch

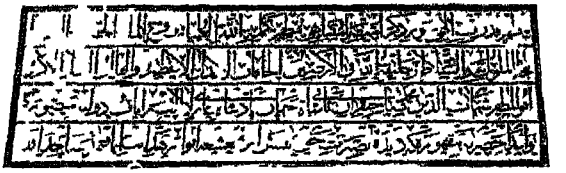
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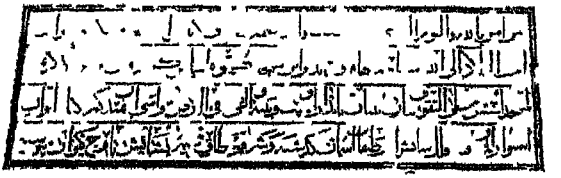


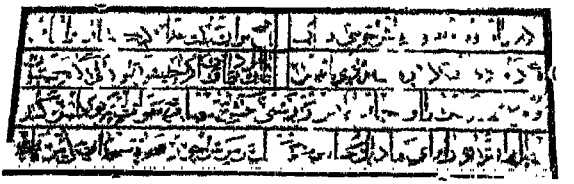
MIMBAR—The Pulpit

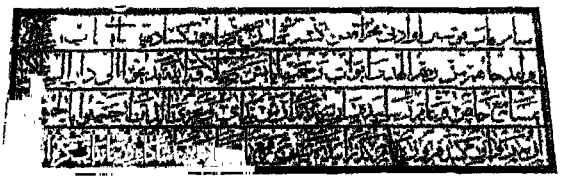
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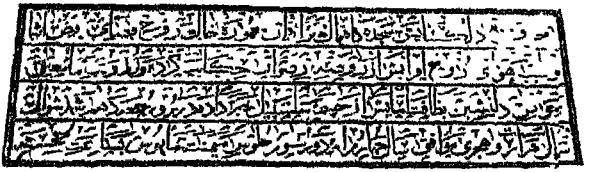




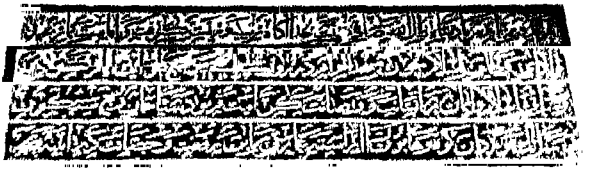
Inscriptions in JAMI MASJID

Archis 1 to 5

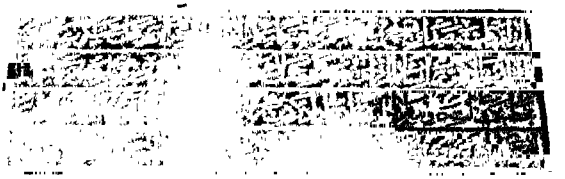
To face pages 19 to 21











INSCRIPTIONS

Arches 7 to 11

To face pages 22 to 24

The floor in both aisles is paved with white marble, on which the designs of praying carpets are outlined in strips of inlaid white marble. Similarly the walls and the pedestals are lined breast-high with white and margined with black marble. The columns in the front of the outer aisle are entirely of marble.

The facing of the mosque proper, or the praying chambers, with reliefs of red stone, is of white marble, which, together with the marble floor and breast-high marble lining of the walls, is strangely effective and gives a wonderful impression of glowing light. An excellent prospect of the general appearance of the interior is obtainable from the top of the Eastern gate, which also provides a good view point from which to observe the marble domes, pillars and general ornamentation.

INSCRIPTIONS.

(ON THE OUTER ARCHES)

The history of this mosque, giving the name of the founder, the date and cost of erection, and the length of time taken in its construction, with a description of its architecture, is inlaid in mosaic stone on ten rectangular red stone-framed marble slabs ($10' \times 2\frac{1}{2}'$) framed in red stone imposed over the ten outer arches.

The dialect of these inscriptions is Persian, the court language of those times, but the writing is in Arabic Naskhi (Manuscript) characters, which illustrates the elegant penmanship of the scribe, and the intricate

workmanship of the inlayer. It is admirably worded in decorative ornamental and oriental style, graced with metaphors and similes, and profuse in figurative expression.

"Scribite scienter litra scripta manet"

Write wisely, the written word remains.

The majority of words employed for religious, architectural and celestial technical renderings are subject to various interpretations, thus entailing considerable care on the part of the interprotor in order to select tho most suitable equivalent. Some terms having no exact equivalent in English, necessitato a somewhat extensive explanation, which prohibits to some extent, absolutely accurate translation.

Consequently many of the beauties of the metaphoric expressions used in the text, add to the difficulty of translation into any modern language, more especially into any foreign language, when the initial desire of the translator is to retain the delicacy and the fidelity of the figurative description, this form of decorative language being seldom employed in Western countries.

Every endeavour, however, has been made to render the East comprehensive to the West, by rendering the translation as English as possible, without departing from the metaphoric and figurative sense of the text.

In order to give the idea of the appearance of these inscriptions in the original, photographs are reproduced with their respective English translation.

Arch I

This is the decree of the Emperor of the Universe, he is the King of the world and of all times, whose kingdom extends to the ends of the earth, all conquering, Master of fate, powerful as Heaven, creator of all laws. Builder of the pillars of all countries and of all Empires. Lord of all knowledge. Noble by nature. Supreme in command. Powerful as fate. The essence of all wisdom, of noble countenance. His fortune favoured by the universe and by the constellations of the Heavens. All glory surrounds him and his armies are as numerous as the stars. His magnificence is likened unto the sun and his court is as sublime as the universe.

Arch II

The manifestation of the Divine Power, the fulfilment of enternal glory. Interpretor of God's Holy word. Apostle of the illustrious faith of Abraham. The refuge and the support of Kings and Emperors. The captain of the hosts of God throughout the world. The most just and the most supreme Emperor. The most glorious and most benign Lord—Abu-Muzaffar Shahabud-din Mohammad Sahib-i-Qiran Sani Shah Jahan Padshah Ghazi—The banners of his Divine inheritance never droop and the enemies of His Majesty are for ever vanquished. Truth is always visible to him. His eyes are brightened by the Holy Guidance:—"Verily he builds the mosques of God who has belief in God and in the Day of Judgement.

Arch III

His soul is the mirror of truth, reflecting its brightness from the rays of the lamps of tradition :—

"To Almighty God the mosques are the most beloved of all the mansions on earth."

This very mosque—its foundations as mighty as the foundations of the mountains—raising its beauty to the skies of heaven, proudly bears the noble inscription "Based on Piety" as an exemplification of its inspired inception. And the solidity of its arched galleries is confirmed by the verse "God has so placed the mountains on the Earth to maintain its balance for the safety of mankind."

Behold the beauty of its minarets and domes, piercing the mighty spaces of the Firmament. The symmetry of its cupolas reflect the celestial Globe.

Arch IV

To those desirious of aught comparing to the sacred arch and to the mighty domes, let them but gaze upon the constellations of the Heavens in the night time and the contour of the sky itself.

Naught else, wrought by the hand of man, would have resembled this dome and this arch had there been no globe of Heaven above and no arch of constellations in the sky.

The flame of the Sun-rayed 'Shamsa' on the spacious portico, reflects the shining lustre of the starry lamps of heaven. The brilliance of the spire of the mighty dome bestows radiance to the celestial lights of paradise.

The pulpit of rare marble exemplifies man's ladder to the courts of Heaven, as likewise does the mighty rock in the mosque of Jerusalem.

ARCH V

And behold, at a distance of Qaba-Qausain (two cubits) or less, is manifest the arch of all benevolence, even as dawn heralds the break of day—"verily the Guidance of their Lord was disclosed unto them."

And behold the gates are open for the servants of the Lord to enter and here-on is inscribed the wonderous proclamation—"Almighty God desires His people to enter into the abode of peace."

The minarets, guarding the mighty globe—The Turquoise coloured Sky—penetrate into the nine regions of the Heavens and proclaim:—

"Those who practise virtue, will Almighty God compensate with great reward."

The serene and elevated roof is the sphere of joy for the angels in Heaven.

ARCH VI

The central arch of the eleven and placed considerably higher than those on either side bears in two circular plaques the following inscription.

"*Ya Hadi*" (*The Guide*) *one of the ninety-nine utterances of God, signifying "O ye, the Leader to the paths of righteousness."*

ARCH VII

Behold the spacious and inspiring outer court, destined as a place of worship and prostration for the favoured in this world. The breezes of Holiness and the incense of Divinity liken it unto the gardens of Paradise, while the translucent water, reflecting God's sky, in the centre basin of marble, foreshadows the beauties of the spring of Sal-Sabil.

On Friday, the tenth of the month of Shawwal 1060 of the Mohammadan Era, corresponding to the fourth year of the third cycle of the august accession to the throne of the mighty King Shah-Jahan, at an auspicious moment,

ARCH VIII

And favourable time, the foundation was laid and decorated, and in the space of six years, by the unceasing exertions of those responsible for the mighty building and by the devoted interest and able assistance of powerful and generous noblemen, by the expert attention to the minutest detail of experienced and renowned architects and skilful labourers—at the cost of a sum of ten lacs of rupees, this inimitable mosque arrived at completion and received its finishing decorations. The ceremony of its completion took place on the day of Eed-ul-Fitar.

Arch IX

The culmination of all this elegance and splendour was therefore crowned by the added lustre of the arrival of the devout and admirable King—God's representative—crowning, by his presence in the congregation, the mighty occasion of the first performance of the "Eed prayer"and other religious duties of Islam. Henceforth and throughout the ages it has become the ultimate pilgrimage of worship for succeeding generations, as is the Masjid-i-Haram on the day of Id-uz-Zuha.

Thus will it bestow further essentials of reverence to the foundation of the faith of Islam, and men who have, with their own eyes, seen all the wonders of the earth in the four corners of the globe, who have traversed the paths of mountains and of plains will nowhere have encountered any building more beautiful, more stately or more glorious than this example of the perfection of man's effort to testify to the glory of Almighty God.

Arch X

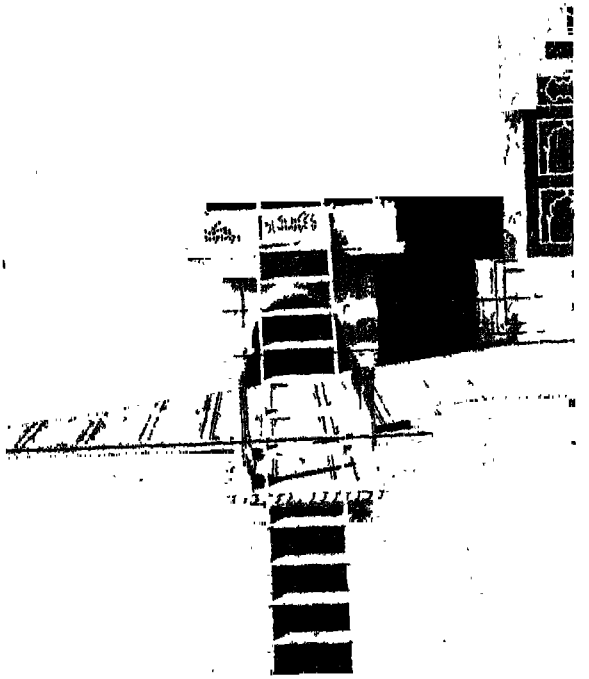
Neither can Historians nor scientists nor poets nor writers of any time, surpass, with tongue or pen, the wonders and the glories of this mosque. Grant that God who created and fashioned both the Earth and the Heavens, may preserve this magnificent building, which dazzles the eye with its beauty and is an ornament to the universe.

Arch XI

May the echo of inspiring glorification and the murmuring and melodies of the chanters wing their way to the temples of the highest Heaven, and may God guard the pulpits of the faithful in all parts of the world, with benedictions on the long and prosperous reign of the great King—Creator of the mosque, administrator of justice and defender of the faith—by the blessings of whose exalted and majestic person the doors of peace and tranquility are opened.

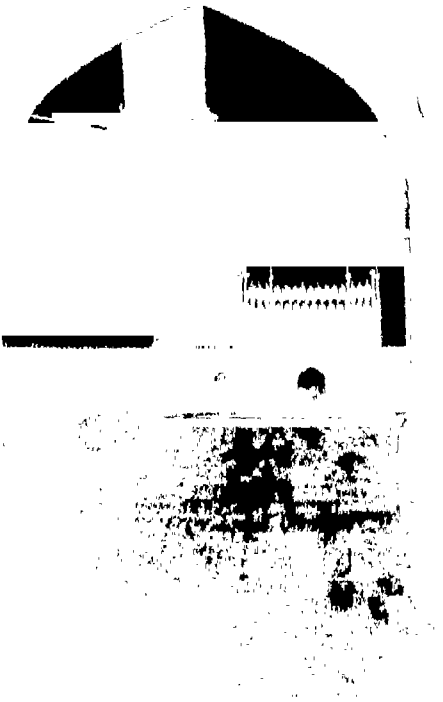
By Divine Right and for the sake of the Righteous.

Inscribed by Noor-ullah-Ahmed.



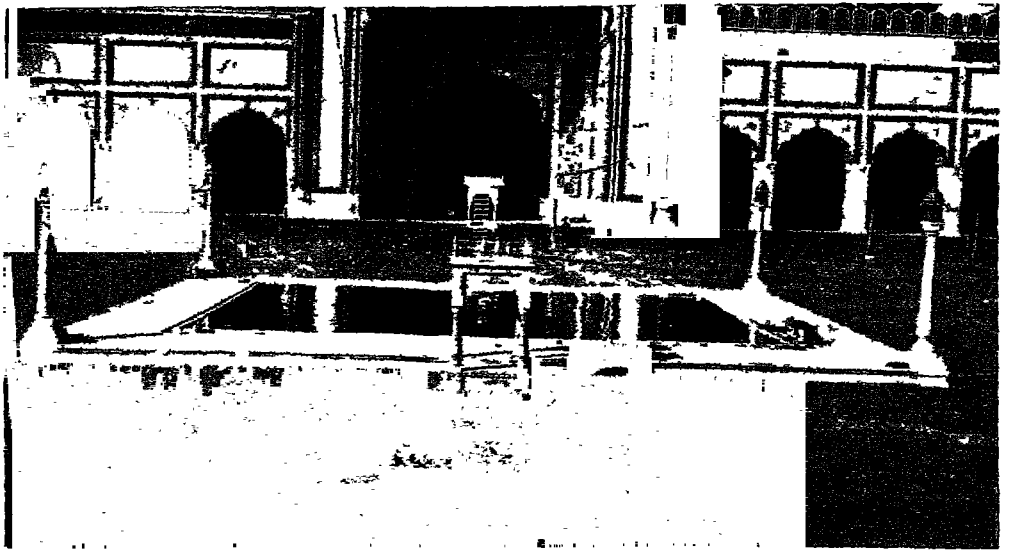
Mukabbar

To face page 25



Glimpse of the Spacious Courtyard

To face page 25

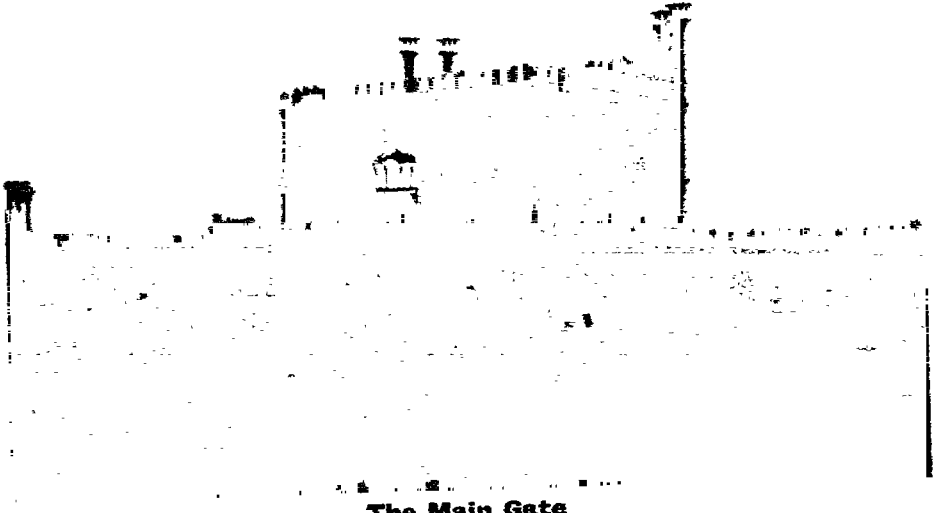


Ablutionary Tank

In the centre of the courtyard

The grey stone Mulabbar can be seen in the foreground

To face page 25



The Main Gate

Taken from the Courtyard

To face page 29

"Mukabbar" literally means "the place destined for the recitation of the 'takbir'," the text and description of which will be found included in the text of the prayers. A marble mukabbar stands under the main front arch. As in the Jami Masjid, the Imam's (leader's) voice can not be heard by the whole congregation, sometimes amounting to fifty thousand in number, the Moazzan with his three assistants cries 'Allaho Akbar' (God is great) from the top of this 'Mukabbar' after the Imam, as an announcement to the congregation to change their positions in prayers.

The first 'Mukabbar' was not installed until 1829, A.D. when prince Salim, son of King Akbar II, appreciating the necessity, provided one of grey stone. This has been recently moved to the eastern side of the ablutionary tank, and is replaced by a marble substitute, more in keeping with the general beauty of its surroundings. It consists of a small platform (4 feet square and six feet in height) enclosed in a netted marble balustrade, and supported by four pillars of the same material.

The spacious courtyard of the mosque is 335 feet long from North to South and 280 feet wide East to West. There are two small courtyards on either side of the praying chambers. All are paved with red stone, and the sides are imperceptibly sloped to enable the rain water to be drained rapidly from the centre through the stone gargoyles.

In the centre of this spacious courtyard is a marble reservoir for ablutions preparatory to prayers. The outer corners of the tank are fitted with massive marble lamp supports. In the centre of the tank stands a marble fountain, the top of which is embossed with foliage.

The tank was designed to receive its supply of water from a well, about 50 yards across the road in the North-West corner. The well was worked by a Persian wheel, which forced the water into four tanks built at a higher elevation. From these tanks the water was conveyed by underground pumps connected with the fountain, from which it was sprayed into the tank and much appreciated by the people in the hot seasons.

In the North-West corner of the tank is a small space enclosed on three sides with a low marble balustrade and opening towards the tank. Tradition has it that in 1180 A. H. (1766 A. D.) a royal eunuch, Mohammad Tahsin Khan, dreamt that he saw the prophet Mohammad performing his ablutions at this spot. As a mark of homage and at his own cost he set up this enclosure, the sides of which bear the date of its construction and the following Persian inscription:—

KAUSAR-I-MOHAMMAD RASUL-ULLAH.
1180 A. H.

The Prophet has been seen here by the saints and the people of God.

It is surely befitting that this stone may become a shrine.

The year of its construction was suggested by the invisible voice with approval and blessings :—

"The enclosure of the place of sitting of the Apostle of God."

MOHAMMAD TAHSIN KHAN,
Royal eunuch,
The founder of this place of reverence.

A few relics of Mohammad and his immediate relations are preserved in the Jami Masjid. These relics came into the hands of Sultan Ba-yazid when he conquered Turkey in 814 A. H. (1414 A. D.). He, however, could not retain them for long, for soon afterwards he was defeated by Amir Taimur Gorgani, who took possession of the relics, in whose keeping and in the hands of whose descendants they remained until Shah Jahan eventually inherited them and who when he had erected Jami Masjid, decided to hallow it by the bestowal of these sacred relics.

As a shrine for these sacraments a beautiful 'Zareeh'* was constructed, which was situated in the cloisters on the right hand side of the praying chambers. The front of the place where this 'Zareeh' was placed, was originally fitted with an awning on the side courtyard, which was enclosed by a stone screen across its entrance.

This zareeh with its sacred contents has since been transferred to a room in the extreme North-east corner. surmounted by the tower. The stone screen is no longer extant, though it can be seen in the photograph reproduced in this book from a very old painting, by the kind permission of the authorities of the Archæological Survey of India.

*"*Zareeh*" literally means a tomb. Technically it applies to a wooden reproduction of the picturesque tomb of Hazrat Imam Husain, the son of Hazrat Fatima, daughter of Mohammad. It is used by 'Shia Musalmans' to keep the sacred relics of Hazrat Imam Husain and his other relations. Its size depends on the dimensions of the place where it is kept.

These relics are over 1300 years old, and those of chief importance are detailed below: –

1. A stone with an impression of the foot print of Mohammad.
2. A pair of leather sandals worn by Mohammad.
3. A portion of the Quran written by Hazrat Imam Hasan.
4. A portion of the Quran written in Kufi characters (monumental style) by Hazrat Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammad. One of his four chosen companions and caliphs or successors.
5. A complete copy of the Quran written also in Kufi characters by Hazrat Imam Husain, the second son of Hazrat Fatima, the daughter of Hazrat Mohammad, by her husband Hazrat Ali. Hazrat Husain was cruelly slain in conflict with Yazid, who eventually succeeded in usurping the caliphate. The ceremonies during the first ten days of the month of Moharram are performed in commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Hussain and of his whole family, including infants in arms.

In addition to those mentioned there are also a number of other relics. The honour of the custody of these treasures was originally granted to Syed Ali Shah, whose descendants have likewise been the hereditory custodians unto the present day. These relics can be seen by visitors on application to the custodian, who is always to be found at the shrine.

The outer walls of the Jami Masjid are of red sand stone, rising to the level of the courtyard which is 30 feet higher than the adjoining ground. Their outer sides are surmounted by ornamental rows of battlements. All four corners being embellished with pavillioned towers. The cloisters at the corners, and those situated in the centre, are closed, some being utilised as the offices of the mosque and committee rooms, and others as store rooms for innumerable praying carpets and other valuables.

Three great gates lead into the courtyard of the mosque. One on the East, one on the North and the third on the South.

The gate on the Eastern side being the main entrance, is of a size and dignity appropriate to so majestic a building. It is a massive structure, three stories in height and was originally intended to contain the living quarters of the functionaries of the mosque, but in deference to a subsequently discovered law of sanctity they have never been employed as habitations

This gate was opened only for the Emperor, who entered by it to perform his devotions every Friday and on the days of the bi-ennial Eed festivals. The royal procession, followed by princes, nobles and a great retinue, emerged from the Fort by the Delhi gateway. At the present time it is only opened on week days to admit the King-Emperor and his Viceroy. The general public are admitted through this gate on Fridays only and on the occasion of the two Eed festivals. On ordinary occasions the public

are admitted through a wicket which is opened at prayer times for the convenience of worshippers approaching from that side.

A photograph of this gate taken from the courtyard is reproduced. The projecting marble canopy over the gateway and the niches in the sides may be occupied by visitors who desire to watch the Muslim congregation at prayer; this ceremony takes place between 1 & 1-30 P. M. on every Friday throughout the year.

The remaining two gates, although massive, are smaller in size and only two stories in height. They also possess niches on their inner sides, but no canopies. These gates project on either side from the width of the collonades and on their outer sides are ornamented by a small minaret at each of the four corners. These minarets are decorated by rows of small marble battlements raised on pillars of the same material. From a distance this ornamentation gives the impression of crowns in a setting of pearls, and adds a strangely attractive facing to their imposing frame.

But, large though they are, even these massive gates are not wide enough to encompass more than a comparatively small portion, at a time, of the vast congregations leaving the precincts of the mosque at the termination of the prayer on Fridays or feast days.

On these occasions an observer may often be well entertained watching the great hurrying crowds massed in the gateway, and resembling, in their varied costumes, a multi-coloured river of humanity, ceaselessly flowing and swayed by the tide of pressure from behind. At

times this scene in the gateway has its serious as well as its humorous side when frail old men are seen struggling to retain their balance, others are loudly complaining of being crushed, while others again appeal, in vain, to the people behind not to push them off their feet. Many are carrying their children on their shoulders and eagerly endeavouring to protect them from the pressure of the multitude. If any unfortunate person permits any possession to fall, he can never hope to recover it—it is in all probability lost for ever under the tread of thousands of feet. Wise people wait for half an hour at the end of the service to allow the stream to pass, before they think of leaving the mosque.

The gates, being on the level of the general elevation of the mosque, are approached by wide flights of between 34 to 40 steps.

In former days these stairways were flanked on the ground level with triangular enclosures, filled with flowers, but at the present day these plots are occupied by vendors' stalls and innumerable descriptions of merchandise are sold. The rent of these stalls adds considerably to the yearly income of the Jami Masjid.

The existence of these booths and the number of customers they attract, have made the precincts surrounding the mosque a very popular meeting place for the citizens of Old Delhi and where, at the close of the day's work, they congregate to meet their friends and pass their evenings in sight-seeing or other amusements, just as in days gone by in London, its citizens used to stroll on the grass in Hyde Park in the summer evenings.

When the building of Jami Masjid had reached its completion, the Emperor unexpectedly and much to the concern of those responsible for its erection, issued orders expressing his desire to say his prayers in the mosque on the following day —The Eed-ul-Fitar (or the Ramazan Eed) This order, at such short notice, was extremely embarrassing to the officers in charge of the construction of the mosque, because mountains of debris and of spare materials were lying about, and the scaffolding was still surrounding the mosque, the dismantling of which alone would constitute a herculean task in itself, irrespective of the difficulties of removing the scaffolding poles, numerous enough in themselves to form several forests.

After much anxious deliberation the authorities decided to issue an invitation to the populace to collect, without payment, all the surplus materials, including scaffolding ladders etc. that had been left lying about, in or around, the Jami Masjid.

This proclamation met with unqualified success, and labour, that ordinarily would have taken months to perform, was completed within a few hours. Almost the whole population of Delhi could be seen swarming from their houses, like an army of ants, and falling upon the materials like hoards of hungry locusts on a harvest. The uproar and the bustle of this scene must have been extraordinary to witness. This great multitude of wildly excited people, each struggling for the largest share—some detaching scaffolding, some carrying away the materials, and others fighting to retain possession of as much as they had greedily secured, whilst their relations were busy in transferring the

plunder to their homes. Suffice it to say that the whole Jami Masjid was cleared of all building material and debris in an incredibly short space of time, and the work of preparing the mosque for the impending ceremony was rapidly put in hand.

The walls were cleaned, the floor washed, chandeliers were hung, prayer carpets spread, tapestry curtains were suspended in the arches, and the paths were covered with "boomi cloth". In a very short time the mosque was decorated like a bride and all was ready to receive the the Emperor—its founder.

The next morning, at prayer time (10 A. M.) the Emperor, mounted on a richly caparisoned elephant and followed by a great procession of princes, grandees and his royal retinue—some on horses, some on elephants, others carried in palanquins, while others again were on foot —sallied from the fort. He was preceeded by heralds running in front, while mace-bearers, clad in gold laced uniforms and bearing gold maces in their hands, advanced at the sides of the procession. The roads were lined by the troops, behind which surged the vast crowds of his subjects, eager to watch their Emperor in his magnificence and pay him homage. Guns firing the salutes were accompanied by the beat of huge drums and the fan-fare of trumpets.

On arrival at the mosque Shah Jahan was received by his Prime Minister and other noblemen already assembled for the purpose. The Emperor joined with the vast crowds

of Muslims in the opening prayer. Following which the sermon was read from the pulpit, and his name was announced as the ruling sovereign, with blessings and benedictions besought for His Majesty's long and prosperous reign. On the termination of the sermon, the Emperor bestowed 'Khilat's' (robes), titles, distinctions and handsome remunerations on the nobles, Imam and many others. The officers responsible for the construction and preparation of the mosque were also lavishly rewarded.

Every Imam who conducts the liturgical service in mosques, must be an extremely pious man, having a thorough knowledge of devotional theology. In addition to being endowed with good looks, his character should be above reproach and his manners courteous, he should be pleasant in his speech and his voice melodious.

Over and above these characteristics the Imam chosen by Shah Jahan for the Jami Masjid at Delhi, was required to be endowed with the additional merit of Holy descent, for the reason that, during the prayer, the Emperor himself stood behind him—which, were he not of sacred lineage, the Imperial dignity would not permit him so to do.

Emperor Shah Jahan, therefore, sent to Bukhara for an Imam with all the foregoing advantages, together with that of suitable parentage. Bukhara, in those days, was the zenith of erudite theologists and priests and, in response to this requisition, Syed Abdul Ghafoor Shah was sent to Delhi and on his arrival was appointed the first Imam to the Imperial mosque. He it was who

therefore conducted the first service which, as has been previously noted, was an Eed prayer. At the conclusion of the prayer the Emperor bestowed upon him a 'Khilat' (robe) and honoured him with the title of 'Imam-us-Sultan'—the Imam of the Emperor. Ever since that day the post of Imam has been hereditory to his descendants, behind whom all the Emperors and Kings have performed their devotions.

In 1907 His Majesty King Habib-ullah-Khan, Amir of Afghanistan, came to India as the guest of the Government. In other cities that he visited the King conducted the congregational service himself, but in the Jami Masjid at Delhi he desired the present Imam, Shams-ul-Ulama Syed Ahmed Sahib, to lead the service, saying he would consider it in the nature of a blessing to perform his devotions behind this notable personage, whose ancestors have been Imams to many Kings and Emperors.

The present Imam is the 9th of his lineage. Shams-ul-Ulama Syed Ahmed is a typical Imam in appearance, his complexion is fair and his expression benign, his voice is musical and he possesses an extensive knowledge of devotional theology. He is much respected and venerated by the Muslim public. Indian Muslim rulers deeply appreciate his presence at their private, state and religious ceremonies. In addition to his devotional activities Shams-ul-Ulama Syed Ahmed renders much invaluable service to the authorities by tendering advice and wise suggestions in times of political and communal crisis—often at great risk both to his popularity and his

person. Syed Ahmad twice experienced the honour of being received by His Majesty King George V the first occasion being in 1905, when His Majesty visited India as Prince of Wales and again in 1912, when he celebrated his Coronation Durbar in Delhi.

The present Imam is at times represented, in conducting the liturgical prayer, by his son Maulvi Hafiz Syed Hamid who is a highly educated and widely read scholar. He is a doctor of theology, and at present is writing an extensive treatise in Urdu "The philosophy of the teachings of Islam." These volumes (the first is already published) demonstrate the immense amount of study he has devoted to the subject.

The Imam employs a large staff of Moazzan, time keepers, illuminators, farrashes and gate keepers. These individuals are all apparelled in scarlet. The gate keepers are responsible for the loose canvas shoes, which are obligatory for visitors to assume over their own footwear before entering the mosque. This is done to protect the floor from defilement due to impurities that may be attached to the soles of boots or shoes.

> In dim cathedrals, dark with vaulted gloom,
> What holy awe invests the sacred tomb;
> There pride will bow, and anxious care expand,
> And creeping avarice come with open hand;
> The gay can weep, the impious can adore,
> From morn's first glimmerings on the chancel floor,
> Till dying sunset shed his crimson stains
> Through the faint halos of the iris'd panes.
>
> *O. W. Holmes.*

The general conduct of the mosque is under the supervision of a Managing Committee. In days gone by the income derived from a large village named Jahan Numa was bequeathed to the Jami Masjid, but, during the last century this village has totally disappeared, and the site has been absorbed by the outskirts of the town of Delhi.

Minor repairs are executed at the expense of the Masjid funds, but for extensive renovations and restorations the authorities are dependent upon the liberality of Muslim ruling chiefs and other devout persons of means for financial assistance.

In 1817 the Northern minaret was struck by lightning and falling masonry damaged the flooring. On this occasion the Honourable East India Company executed the necessary restoration from Public funds.

In 1842 a number of slabs of stone became detached from the Northern wall. These were replaced by His Majesty, Bahadur Shah, the last Moghal King.

In 1875 the necessary repairs to the ceilings and the supports of the Northern Cupola were paid for by money bequeathed for the purpose by one, Mohammad Shafi.

In 1875, His Highness Nawab Kalb-i-Ali Khan of Rampur, placed in the charge of the Deputy Commissioner of Delhi a sum of 1½ lac of Rupees for the general repairs of the Jami Masjid. This money sufficed until the year 1902, and was administered by the authority of several Deputy Commissioners. When granting this donation, the Nawab especially stipulated that on no condition was the

money to be invested. The investment of church funds being considered sacrilege in Islam. The increment from invested capital being forbidden to be employed in the interests of the mosques, which must be erected and sustained solely from the results of honest individual achievements.

In 1895 the Southern minaret was struck by lighting, and was repaired and restored at the expense of His Highness the Nawab of Bahawalpur, who presented the sum of Rs. 14,000 for the purpose.

On the occasion of his visit to Delhi in 1928, His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad made a donation of one lac of rupees to be devoted to necessary repairs and other requirements.

A little story concerning the original superstructure of the minarets is not without interest. An American visitor to Jami Masjid, after evincing great interest in the building proceeded to lie on his back at different parts of the courtyard and carefully regard the minarets from this position. Not unnaturally he was surrounded by a crowd of curious bystanders, who wished to learn his reason for so doing. In answer to an enquiry he explained that he was an engineer himself, and was endeavouring to calculate in which direction the minarets would fall, should they ever be damaged. He demonstrated that he had ascertained that the original architects had built them with an imperceptable outward incline, to ensure that, should they ever fall, they would drop into the courtyard and not onto the praying chambers.

The truth of his words is verified for, on the two occasions the minarets have been struck by lighting, the debris did not fall on the praying chambers, but away from them into the courtyard, causing little damage to the pavement of the latter.

The general design of the mosque Jami Masjid, makes a tremendous appeal to those who appreciate purity of line in architecture. Seen from a distance the mosque, flanked by its great stairways, towers above its surroundings, the three gaint cupolas and the minarets rising in graduated heights above the high red walls of the enclosing collonades, their corners surmounted by pavillioned towers.

From inside the courtyard the symmetry of the conception of the whole building is strikingly apparent. From this point of view and facing West, the beautiful ornamentation of the praying chambers, immediately surmounted by the marble cupolas and the minarets, is wonderfully effective and in spite of its 300 years of varied experience, the mosque shows no sign of its great age. To all appearance it might have been but recently erected, so much care has been lavished on its general upkeep and so well and truly was it built.

The open spaces that surround the mosque and the adjoining neighbourhood are very popular meeting places for the residents of Delhi every afternoon until late in the evenings. The rent of the stalls of the vendors of varied merchandise yields a goodly daily revenue, the spaces being hired by a great number of shopkeepers, hawkers and

peddlers. These plots are divided into sections or stalls Some of the shopkeepers have erected temporary awnings over their stalls, while others display their stock in trade on the open ground.

The roads also are crowded with every variety of traffic in the afternoons. Many enterprising tradesmen exhibiting their merchandise on light hand carts, while betel leaves and cigarettes are sold on trays hung round the neck. Some shopkeepers confine themselves to an assortment of goods at five pice per article, others again at four pice and so on.

The air is rent with the strange cries of these vendors calling the attention of the passers by to the excellence of their supplies. The general confusion of traffic and the gathering of the crowd in the afternoons at the foot of the Jami Majid greatly resembles a country fair, whilst the great mosque itself towers benignly above these petty interests of each changing generation.

To visitors unaccustomed to the East, a short description of some of the wares displayed by these indefatigable tradesmen may be of interest.

Here is found a sure market for goods of every description and many searchers after novelties pay constant visits in the certainty of picking up curios of varying degrees of value. Establishments selling many varieties of cooked food, together with ices and sweets are very popular and these stalls are always surrounded by an enthusiastic

crowd, while many customers, their hunger satisfied, remain in the immediate vicinity for hours together, gossiping with their friends over their tea cups.

One corner beneath the mosque is occupied by rows of piece good sellers—always surrounded by fathers of families busily purchasing bits of cloth of varying sizes with which to make garments for their numerous offspring, while in another corner are displayed every variety of material, from coarse cotton to beautifully embroidered silk. In the precincts surrounding the mosque both the beggar and the rich man can purchase his raiment, each according to the capacity of his purse.

The entire stairway leading to the Eastern gate is a veritable market in itself, the spacious top step being devoted particularly to the sale of tame pigeons, for in Delhi pigeon fancying is a very popular pastime and the owners of these birds a constant source of nuisance to their neighbours, especially to the purdah women. These pigeon owners release their birds from the roofs of their houses, thus enforcing the purdah women to retire into the close confinement of their rooms below, depriving them of the benefit of the sun in the winter and the cool air in the summer. Would that the sympathetic municipal authorities could frame some by-laws to put some restrictions on this unbearable nuisance.

These men often employ far from humane means to train their birds—one favourite method of inducing their return when released, is to deprive them of food for a

considerable period before giving them their liberty. They then watch them circling round for several minutes calling to them loudly and whistling, again to the great annoyance of the neighbours. Eventually they throw grain on their roofs to entice their return, redoubling their shouts at the same time. In time the pigeons learn to connect their master's voices with the thought of food and the owners achieve their aim.

These pigeon fanciers also hold daily competitions between rival flocks—teaching their birds to circle in unison through each other and many other diversions of a like description. A certain number of birds loose their bearings and these are brought to the Jami Masjid by their finders and sold to or exchanged by their late owners.

All varieties of pigeons are purchased and sold on this step, from expensive pedegree specimens to birds of small value. Some enterprising individuals make a handsome livelihood by selling their own tame birds, who invariably return to their owners at the first opportunity—thus ensuring an inexhaustible stock-in-trade for the exploitation of unsuspecting purchasers.

Fighting cocks, poultry of all breeds, talking parrots and others of rare plumage are occasionally brought for sale, when their owners wish to dispose of them.

The intermediate steps bear stalls dealing in second hand clothes, imported from Europe and America, extremely unsuitable to the majority of the type of persons who purchase them!

The centre steps of the left hand flights specialize in stalls for the requirements of the very poor classes, who can be seen buying old articles of clothing, such as quilts, scarfs, shirts, peticoats and cooking utensil etc. given by Hindus on the death of deceased relations to certain types of Brahmans, who sell these things to sweepers, coolies and others.

From the first days of Jami Masjid, a traditional Bazaar, called the 'Guzri Bazzar', was held at the foot of the bottom step, where for generations thousands of people, both rich and poor, have passed. The name 'Guzri Bazaar' was derived from a Persian verb meaning to pass. Here every description of novelty was exhibited for sale as the market contained some stalls, dealing in old and second hand books, clothes and other antique rarities. The uneducated people, having no knowledge of correct titles, were accustomed to evolve some explanatory substitute for the Persian words and always succeeded in doing so in accordance with their understanding of the articles in question. In this case, for example, they confused the name Guzri, "to pass" with "Gudri" which means a "patched garment of a beggar" and in consequence named the bazzar the Gudri Bazzar. Either of these names being, as it so happens, appropriate appelations for the market.

This traditional bazzar has been recently removed by the orders of the authorities, to the great loss of trade to the merchants and of the income derived therefrom by the mosque and at the same time to the

great disappointment and inconvenience of the public who frequented this particular corner of Jami Masjid in search of novelties or necessities. the while enjoying their usual stroll—thus killing two birds with the same stone! But although the Guzri Bazzaar is no longer to be found in its traditional form, a very numerous company of small traders are always selling their wares in the proximity of the mosque.

On the open space accross the road, a large number of quack doctors can be seen laying out their stock of medicines on sheets spread on the ground. The majority affirm that their medicines will restore youth to old age, others again offer "antidotes" as a sure cure for the most venemous form of snake-bite. This "doctor" will hold a snake in his hand and tender its bite to any one of the crowd, with a free trial dose of his medicine if he chooses to accept the offer. The offer is never accepted but these invitations ensure a good sale. Another will be seen proclaiming the efficiency of his panacea—"a cure for all imaginable ailments" to a surrounding crowd.

To attract a greater audience than their rivals, these individuals adopt peculiar methods, some exibit rare snakes, others perform card tricks, others again will recite humorous poems. They introduce their wares very cunningly and with their plausible stories and a fine flow of oratory they do their utmost to prove that the qualified doctors are entirely ignorant and merely licensed executioners, whilst they themselves are hereditory, or rather born doctors, and have inherited all their wonderful cures from

their forefathers, or they maintain they have been given the power of healing by some '*yogi*' after serving him for a long time. In short, the one who can convince his hearers of the most lies achieves the best sales. It proves the Indian saying that many cunning people would be starved to death, had there been no fools about in the world.

These falsehoods, thanks to their daily practice, are so laboriously embellished, their demonstrations so cunningly performed and the symptoms of the various diseases so fully detailed, that nearly every one in the crowd begins to suspect he possesses the described diseases himself, and falling easy victims to their plausible manufacturer, buys the stuff, the "cure for all ailments".

Mock auctions are also held there occasionally. One of the party assumes the part of an auctioneer, while the others pretend to be bidders. To encourage the crowd the 'auctioneer' knocks down a few articles very cheaply to his confederates, in consequence, confidence having been established, the rest of the proceedings eventually assume the proportions of a very successful swindle.

Further away the snake charmers are giving a display by inciting a mongoose to fight a cobra, and exhibiting varieties of snakes, scorpions and other venomous creatures. The jugglers too, with their wonderful tricks in the open, are puzzling a huge crowd. Here they perform the well known basket trick, enclosing a man in a narrow oblong basket, which they proceed to stab with a long

pointed sword from all angles. This trick which is performed on specially prepared platforms in other countries, is here displayed on the open and in the broad daylight.

In addition to these many side shows, circuses, Theatrical companies, Carnivals and other amusements visit these grounds in rapid succession, and secure good harvests from the Delhi public.

As can well be imagined the surroundings of Jami Masjid present an animated scene in the afternoon—thousands of people flock to this favourite meeting place, each one bent on some pursuit. Whilst over all towers the age old mosque—which for over 300 years has watched their fathers and their fathers' fathers crowding round those same precincts—There comes the "call to Sunset prayer" and the great crowd, with one accord, abandons its small pleasures and hastens up those flights of steps well trodden by their ancestors and into the mosque itself, to prostrate themselves before Almighty God and ask His blessings.

N. B. The author wishes to correct the previously quoted dimensions of the praying chambers (page 11) which are derived from another source. He has since personally ascertained these dimensions are incorrect. The corrections are as follows :—

Length *240 ft.*
Width *70 ft.*

END OF PART I.

INTRODUCTION.

(Muslim Prayer)

Before giving the text of the Muslim prayer, I should like in a few words to explain the meaning of 'Islam' and to give an outline of the Muslim religion.

The word 'Islam' signifies 'to bow down' or 'to lay down one's neck'. Theologically it means to submit oneself to the Divine commands and laws, which have been conveyed to us by Almighty God through His various prophets from time to time.

The followers of Islam, for reasons given below, call themselves 'Muslims' or 'Musalman', and not Mohammadans.

The Muslim belief constitutes Noah as the first of the five great law givers, the other four being Abraham, Moses, Christ and Mohammad, each of whom was sent to revive the same covenant, that is to say to enforce the worship of one God, and to suppress idolatory and misbeliefs.

Believing in the truth of the mission of these five prophets, the muslims claim to be the followers of all, and not only of Mohammad. For this reason they resent

being called "Mohammadans", a name which is given to them only by Western people. The muslims consider that this limited appellation in no way represents the universality of their scriptural beliefs and religious conceptions.

All the above great law givers confirmed the initial mission of their predecessors, with certain unavoidable variations necessitated by changes in the social customs and religious rites, resultant from the passage of time, but always steadfastly affirming the fundamental law of the belief in Unity and the worship of the One God.

In the same way the procedures of the acts of devotion also were constantly revised. Each prophet in his turn, adding further expressions of homage to the ceremonies of worship. Furthermore, the essential need of humility and submission was insisted upon as is exemplified in the pitiful orisons and in the sublimity of the prayers—all adding to the sum total of man's devotions to his Mighty Creator.

As Mohammad's teaching represents to Muslims the latest and final revelation of God, he completed his mission on earth by exemplifying numerous postures of homage and expressions of humility in the Muslim prayer.

Thus a Muslim, in his very person demonstrates reverence, by his tongue, he utters praise, and his heart believes in the Greatness of God.

In addition to the above, Mohammad called upon the Muslims to worship in congregation and thus he bowed the

heads of thousands simultaneously: enormous number of individuals being subjugated at will as though by some invisible hand, in bending and prostrating themselves before the All-Powerful.

The scene of a great Muslim congregation at their liturgical prayer is extremely imposing and impressive to the observer.

Needless to say the tenets, examples and instructions of each Prophet were followed by the faithful until the advent of his successor, just as in India when a new Viceroy assumes authority, the people readily bend their will to further laws and improvements which he may consider advisable to administer, and do so in the spirit of true loyalty and obedience to the King-Emperor, by whom he has been sent to rule this land.

> Thus times do shift; each thing his turn does hold;
> New things succeed, as former things grow old.
>
> *Herrick.*

PART II

NAMAAZ.

(Muslim Liturgical prayer)

Every Musalman man, woman, and child of twelve years is strictly commanded, as an unavoidable duty, to pray, or perform his devotions, to God, five times a day, for the failing or ignoring of so doing he is liable to very heavy punishment.

No excuse is admissible; if he is unable to stand, he can say his prayers seated, if he can not even sit, he can pray lying down, if he can not even move his hands, he should pray by signs. He will only be excused when he is unconscious, too ill even to perform by signs, on a journey, in confinement, or otherwise unavoidably prevented from fulfilling his duties. He must recite the prayers he missed as soon as he is in position to perform them. Business, or any other wordly pursuit, even of the most important nature, may not serve as an excuse to omit them. Games or amusements are of course, out of the question.

Prayer means to purify—spiritually and physically.

Spiritually—because he who prays stands in supplication before his Lord, his Creator, his Benefactor, five

times a day, praising Him for His Glory and power, thanking Him for His help and guidance in the right path. At the same time a devotee is imploring His protection against the temptations of the devil, repenting his sins and beseeching Him for His forgiveness, and lastly, begging for His Mercy and blessing in this world and the next.

Physically—because he has to wash all parts of the body exposed to contamination by any form of dirt five times every day before every prayer, in addition to keeping his clothes clean and free from all impurities.

QIBLA OR KAABA.

There is, in the city of Mecca, a house or sanctuary, the antiquity of which has been traced from authentic sources to the time of Adam, who raised it for the worship of God. It has suffered the effects of time and weather, and has been repaired and rebuilt several times It was demolished during the Deluge in Noah's time. Its site was pointed out by God to Abraham, who with the help of his son Ishmail, re-erected it on its former foundations according to the Divine Command. God also convenanted with him and Ishmail "Keep My House sanctified for those who perform their devotions to Me, and bow down and prostrate themselves before Me." This sanctuary has several names, the following three being the most common:—

(1) Kaaba.

(2) Qibla

(3) Bait-ullah.

(1) **Kaaba** literally means "cubical." The house is so called because of its equal dimensions in length, breadth and height, which gives it a cubical shape.

(2) **"Qibla"** only means "direction". The house is so called because every Musalman must turn his face towards it when praying, in whatever part of the world he may be.

(3) **Bait-ullah,*** literally Bait, means a house and Allah = The God. Thus Bait-ullah signifies 'House of God'. It is so called because it has been from time immemorial the house of worship and the place of pilgrimage, although it must be remembered that God is not believed to dwell in it or in its direction.

To face this sacred place is a manifestation of unity, respect and discipline, as well as to demonstrate that the Muslim world has but one God and one goal, which is the essential teaching of Islam. By the Muslim, Kaaba is of course held most sacred, as being the first sanctuary in the world, raised by Adam and devoted to the worship of God, who appreciated it so highly that in the Quran He calls it "My House" and ordained that all the Muslims turn their faces towards it when praying.

*Hebrew has a similar word 'Bethel'—meaning House of God—A name that was given to any house raised for the worship of God.

MASJID (MOSQUE).

Masjid literally means a place of Sijda—prostration. Every quarter of the city has at least one mosque, and the people are enjoined to say their prayers therein thus enabling them to meet each other five times a day and join in the worship of their God. Also there is to be found, in every town, one great central mosque, called the 'Jami Masjid' which literally means "the Mosque that collects the congregation." The people of the whole city must assemble there to say their Friday prayers, thus ensuring an opportunity of meeting each other at least once a week, to exchange their views, and keep up their friendly and social relations, likewise the people who can afford to go to Mecca, are ordered to attend the mosque at Mecca on a pilgrimage at least once in their lives. Thus representatives of the whole Muslim world can meet once a year when they can exchange their views.

The above facts will show that Islam not only teaches and preaches religion, but at the same time guides its followers to maintain their social, commercial and fraternal relations with each other, not only in their locality but throughout the whole world.

In accordance with the saying "Unity is strength" a Musalman is ordered preferably to say his prayers in a mosque in a congregation, but at the same time every Musalman is his own priest and every clean place in the whole world is his mosque. Wherever he is, when the time of prayer comes, he can conduct his prayers by himself, be it by

the side of a road, at the foot of a hill, in a wilderness, or in a jungle, on the platform of a railway station, or the rattling seats of a railway carriage, nothing can interrupt his devotions to His Maker, The Omnipresent, the Omniscient and the Omnipotent.

> Why should we crave a hallow'd spot ?
> An altar is in each man's cot,
> A church in every grove that spreads
> Its living roof above our heads.
>
> *Wordsworth.*

As the keynote of the teaching of Islam is adherence to unity and suppression of idolatory, no decoration, pictures or photographs, bearing the resemblance of any living thing, is allowed in a mosque. The only embellishments allowed are either those of architecture, the epithets of God or verses from Quaran, written, carved or inscribed in beautiful designs on the walls, thus reiterating the praises and emphasizing the Unity and Greatness of the Almighty, to Whose worship alone the edifice is dedicated.

It must be understood that mosques are only intended and reserved for the performance of devotions, for preaching, for the discussion of and solving religious points. Idle talk, bad language, indecent manners, the conduct of worldly matters or business transactions and indecent or incomplete dress are strictly prohibited. A mosque is to be regarded as the Court of God, and great respect and reverence must be observed as soon as it is entered.

When once thy foot enters the church, beware
God is more there than thou : for thou art there
Only by his permission. Then beware,
And make thyself all reverence and fear.

Herbert.

It may be noted that, once a mosque is dedicated to God, no one on earth has authority to demolish or utilize it for any other purpose, or to make any transaction regarding its sale, purchase or exchange. It can be added to, but not a sigle inch of land can be taken from it. If any one does so, either in response to temptation for any temporary benefit, or through the arrogance of his authority in this unstable world, he will have to answer for it on the day of judgment before God—the Greatest authority and the eventual inheritor of the whole universe.

All mosques possess two minarets with one or three towers in the centre, as space may allow. The minarets are designed for the call to prayers, so that it can be heard from a height at a fair radius as far as a human voice can carry. If the minarets are too high, it is called from the sides or the courtyard of the mosque.

AZAAN.

(The call to prayer.)

In larger mosques there are at least two functionaries of the mosque. The "Imaam" and the "Moazzan". The priest incharge of the mosque, called 'Imaam,' leads or conducts the Namaaz (The Divine service), whilst the Moazzan calls out the "AZAAN" (The call for prayer)

about half an hour before the service is held. When the Moazzan calls the "Azaan" he stands facing the Kaaba and holds his index fingers in his ears.

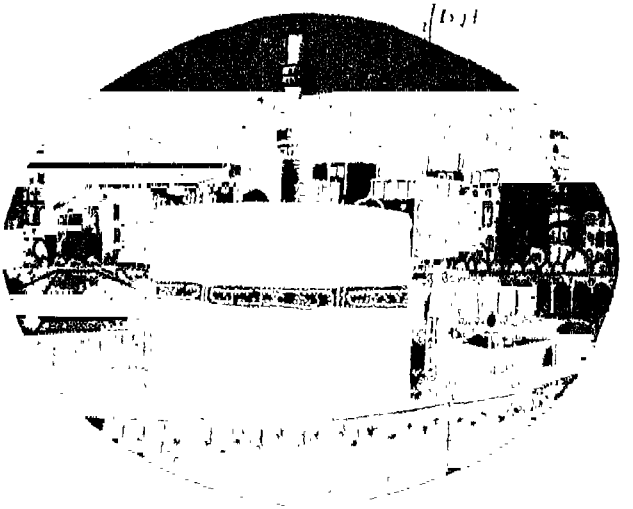
THE TEXT OF THE AZAN.

God is the Greatest! God is the Greatest!
God is the Greatest! God is the Greatest!
I bear witness that there is no deity but God!
I bear witness that there is no deity but God!
I testify that Mohammad is the Apostle of God!
I testify that Mohammad is the Apostle of God!
Come to prayers! Come to prayers! — *At these two lines the Moazzan turns his face to the right.*
Come to prosperity! Come to prosperity! — *At these two lines he turns his face to the left.*
God is the Greatest!
God is the Greatest!
There is no deity but God!

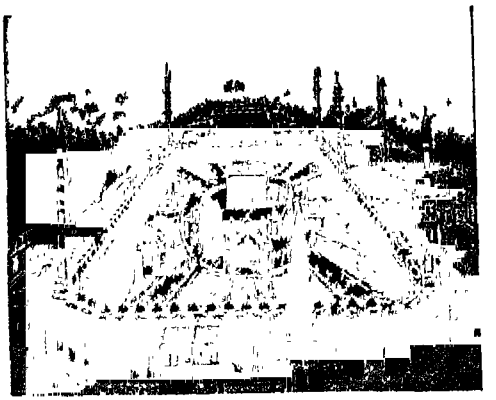
In the morning when the people are enjoying their sweetest sleep, they are warned and roused by the addition of the following, after the tenth line.

Prayers are better than sleep!
Prayers are better than sleep!

It is a reminder of the fact that, after death, there is nothing but sleep until the day of resurrection, so whilst there is life, sleep should not be preferred to prayers, which in the early morning are more acceptable to God, as at that early hour the heart is pure, serene and more attentive, being free from all worldly worries and pursuits.



'KAABA'—'The House of God' at MECCA



Masjid-i-Haraam

Embracing the Kaaba

To face page 51



"The Call to Prayer"

To face page 56



Qayaam



Ruku



Sijda



Qaada

To face page 68



Imaam leading devotees in prayer in the congregation.

To face page 66

As Islam is a religion of nature, nothing unnatural or artificial is allowed even for the announcement of the time of prayer. No gongs, no bells, nor any other noise of instruments is permissible. The simple and natural voice of the 'Moazzan' in high pitched tones echoes in the surrounding atmosphere, penetrating into the minds of Muslims. They keep their ears open for it even in the busiest hours of their work, which they postpone, directly they here "The call" and hurry to the mosque to join the congregation and to perform their devotions to God—The Provider, in Whose hand is the success of all their labour.

Deo adjuvante labor proficit

"With God's assistance our toil is profitable."

PURIFICATION.

Purity of heart, body, clothes, and surroundings is of vital importance in approaching the Holy Being. Every thing must be absolutely free from all impurities and defilements. Prayers can be said in ragged and patchy clothes as long as they are pure and clean, but even one spot of any impurity or defilement will profane and disqualify even the "Sunday best" dress used at prayers. Likewise the place employed must be essentially clean. A prayer carpet (4 Ft. by 2 Ft.) is spread on a clean spot in the house. When prayers are to be said in the jungle, a grassy plot or any other clean spot is itself enough in the absence of a prayer carpet.

WAZU (Ablution.)

Ablution is essential before saying the prayers. Ablution consists of washing the face, arms up to the elbows, feet up to the ankles, gargling, drawing water through the nose and wiping the head and neck with wet hands. In short every part exposed to contamination is to be washed and cleaned. To observe uniformity and ensure purity, the ablution must be performed in the prescribed manner and each part of the body washed three times in the appointed order.

EQUALITY.

In Islam, colour or nation, race or tribe, caste or birth, riches or rank have no distinction. Every one—great or small—is the same in the eyes of God—The Greatest, The King and the beggar have the same entrance to the world and the same exit from it. Empty handed they come and empty handed they go. There is a tradition that when the bier of Alexander the Great was being carried to the grave, both his hands were placed outside the coffin, as a warning to the people that even such a mighty Emperor—conqueror of almost the whole world,—possessor of enormous wealth, commander of a huge Army, governing innumerable subjects, was leaving this life empty-handed. It is the teaching of all the Scriptual religions that proves the proverb by practice that no one was born with a spoon in his mouth, and is equal also in going empty-handed to his grave.

"My equal he will be again
Down in that oblivious gloom,
Where all the prostrate ranks of men
Crowd without fellowship, the tomb."

J. Montgomery.

Therefore the accommodation of the congregation in a mosque depends on an early or late arrival. No one can claim a better seat, unless he comes early and finds it vacant, neither are seats reserved for any special person; a pauper in shabby and patched clothes can stand shoulder to shoulder to a well dressed noble, a beggar side by side with a king.

The spirit prevailing in the mosque compels each individual to consider himself the humblest creature in the court of the Almighty, and drives all feelings of pride, haughtiness, and all sense of rank and dignity from his heart.

DISCIPLINE.

As soon as the prayers are to be commenced, every one takes up his position in one of the rows, which are about four feet apart, to allow space for the prostration of the people in the row behind. It is every individual's responsibility to keep the row straight. At the commencement of the prayer every devotee stands, facing the 'Kaaba' giving his full attention, his greatest respect and utmost reverence, folding his hands a little below his waist, with his head inclined and his gaze fixed on the spot, where his forehead is going to touch the ground in prostration. Looking about, fidgeting, talking or whispering are not allowed. Once the prayers have started, no one, unless for some unavoidable cause, can break away or fall out until they are finished. The congregation remain so motionless, that the rows in a manner resemble immoveable steel walls. It is a marvel to note that, as soon as the prayers commence, the murmurs of thousands of people are reduced to dead silence, in

which only the voice of the 'Imam' (Priest) reciting the Koranic verses, echoes and resounds, penetrating into the very cores of the hearts of the worshippers, who listen to them with attentive eagerness. The whole scene produces such a sense of rest and harmony, that each individual amongst this enormous crowd, can perform his devotions, with the greatest composure of mind and enjoys an undisturbed and uninterrupted meditation with his Creator.* The whole scene is often admitted even by the most controversial spectators, to be impressive, and awe inspiring. It is again to the credit of the simple but perfect teaching of Islam that the congregation, including some of the most unruly and disorderly people, is considered, even by the critics of Islam, to compare advantageously with the best disciplined Army in the world. Is it not a miracle and a proof of the truth in Islam ?

*It is at this stage and for this reason that at the time of prayer, the music of Hindus processions near the mosque is objected to by the Musalmans. Would that the considerate Hindus might realize the importance of silence at the time of meditation and devotion. In insisting on playing music during the time of Muslim prayer, they not only challenge and disturb the public peace, but also unthinkingly commit a sin themselves by causing disturbance and interruption in the worship of Almighty Lord and God of all whom they worship themselves directly or indirectly.

Father of all ! in every age
In every clime ador'd
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord !"

Pope.

PUNCTUALITY.

In addition to purity, equality, and discipline, the prayer also teaches punctuality, which has to be observed very strictly. The prayers must be said within their respective prescribed time, after expiration of which they are less meritorious, to the extent of being almost worthless. The early part of the prescribed time is preferably enjoined, whilst slackness or indolence are severly condemned. Mr. Richter defines this virtue admirably by saying "Regularity is unity; unity is godlike."

TIME OF PRAYER.

It is the indispensible duty of every Musalman man and woman to say his or her prayers five times a day, as detailed below:—

(1) **Early morning prayer**:—The time for this is from the first streak of light or sign of dawn, or as soon as a black thread can be distinguished from a white one, until *before sunrise.*[*]

(2) **Midday prayer**:—is recited from the time when the sun passes its highest point until the shadow of a substance doubles itself in length.

(3) **Afternoon prayer**:—is recited soon after the shadow of any object is double, until before sunset.

[*]The prostration is strictly forbidden on two occasions, *e.g.* when the sun is either rising or setting, to avoid confusion with the practice of the Pagan Arabs, who used to worship the sun.

(4) Sunset prayer:—is recited soon after the sunset.

(5) Isha prayer:—The time for this prayer commences soon after the fading of twilight, and until before early dawn.

FRIDAY PRAY

Friday is the most important and sacred day of the week. It is the Sabbath of the Musalmans. There is a special Mid-day service on every Friday. The injunctions for this service are so strict that, on hearing the call to prayer, it is a sacrilege and unlawful to do or to continue any business or transaction. Wordly affairs can be attended to before the call to prayer and resumed after the service. Friday is a general holiday for the Musalmans.

God ordains the Friday prayer in the following words.

" O ye who believe !
When ye are called to Friday Prayer,
Hasten to the commemoration of God.
And dis-continue traffic (*business*)
This is better for ye, if ye apprehend.
And when the prayer is terminated
Then disperse yourselves in the land,
And seek God's grace (*bounties*).
And remember God frequently.
That ye may be successful (*blessed*).

*And when attracted by merchandise or by sport,
they departed to it.
And left Ye (Mohammad) standing.
Warn them the beneficience of God is more precious
Than sport and merchandise
And God is the Supreme Provider.*

POSTURES ADOPTED IN PRAYER.

Before explaining the text, it will be advisible to indicate the different postures that are assumed while repeating the prayers, so that the reader may understand clearly and easily what is read or said in the various positions. The prayers recited at different times have a different number of "Rakaats" each of which has three postures, with the fourth posture at the end of every 2nd "Rakaat."

(1) Qayaam Standing.

(2) Ruku Bending the upper part of the body.

(3) Sijda Prostrating twice.

(4) Qaada Kneeling down and sitting on left foot.

* These verses hint to the fact that a travelling merchant used to come to Medina with grain and other necessities. Once he came during the famine, and arrived when, after the Friday-Prayer, the sermon was being delivered by Mohammad. He used to announce the approach of his caravan by the beat of drums and music of tambours. The congregation having heard the proclamation and thinking the attendance to the sermon not essential, slipped away for fear of being too late to buy their supplies of grain. Mohammad was left standing with an audience of only twelve men.

This last posture is adopted at the end of every two rakats.

The full description of the above four postures is as follows :—

(1) Qayaam Standing.

A devotee stands in submission and reverence facing the 'Kaaba' at Mecca with his right hand placed on his left just below the waist and with his head inclined, looking down at the spot where his forehead is to touch the ground in prostration.

(2) Ruku (Bending.)

The devotee stoops forward until the upper part of his body is bending low, with the open palms of his hands resting on his knees, looking at his big toes.

(3) Sijda—(Prostration.)

In this posture the devotee's forehead and nose touches the ground, his hands resting on the ground with thumbs beside the lobes of his ears. Likewise the knees and all the toes touch the ground. The prostration is performed twice in each 'rakaat.'

The above three postures finish the first rakaat, after which he stands up and resumes the first posture, to perform the 2nd rakat. The minimum number of rakaats in a prayer is two. Even if a prayer contains more than two 'rakaats' the following posture is assumed after every two rakaats.



NIYAT To face page 66

Making a vow to perform the devotions



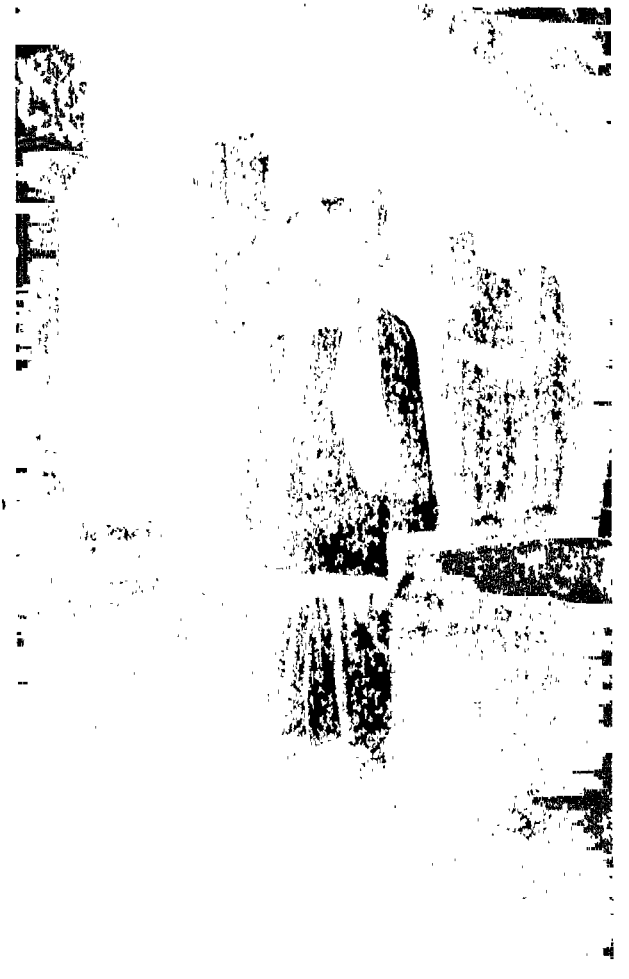
Qayaam *Standing*

To face page 66



Ruku *Bending*

To face page 68



Standing up after Ruku

To face page

(4) Qa'da — Sitting.

After performing the second 'Sijda' in the second 'rakaat' a devotee kneels down and rests on his left foot, placing the open palm of his hands on his knees, with his head inclined, looking at the spot his forehead touched the ground in prostration.

(5) Du'a — Prayer.

To ask God for blessing, health, prosperity, success, or the fulfilment of any desire or need, is also a part of the devotion, because in doing so, one is bound to believe in His Greatness and Benevolence, in addition to declaring His Divine Majesty, Glory and Power before asking for His Grace, Favour, Help or Blessing. Therefore every Muslim, at the completion of his set of prayers, raises both his hands towards heaven in supplication, praises the Almighty God and beseeches Him for His guidance to the right path, repents of and asks for forgiveness for his sins, to be protected from the temptations of Satan, to be preserved from infidelity, polytheism and superstition, from haughtiness and hypocrisy, and to be favoured with the blessing of this world and the next.

Say, what is prayer, when it is prayer indeed?
The mighty utterance of a mighty need,
The man is praying who doth press with might
Out of his darkness into God's own light.

TRENCH.

THE TEXT OF THE PRAYER.

Before the prayer commences, the 'Imaam' or leader takes up his stand in front of the worshippers. The "Moazzan" (or the assistant) repeats the "Takbeer" which has the same text as the 'Azaan' except for the phrase "The prayer has truly begun" which is repeated twice. Whilst the 'Moazzan' repeats the 'Takbeer' the people take up their position in rows ready to attend to the prayers. As soon as the Moazzan has finished repeating the 'Takbeer' The Imaam says "Alla-ho-Akbar — "God is the Greatest." The people raise their open hands, palms upwards, touch the lobes of their ears with their thumbs, and then fold their hands just below the waist with the right hand on the left. NALU, J94, K50

Raising the hands to the ears indicates that a devotee has relinquished all thoughts of worldly concerns and has engaged himself, by standing to attention, to perform his devotions to his Creator. Hands folded, head bent, and with gaze fixed on the ground gives a devotee an attitude of utmost reverence and humble submission to the Divine power. Before taking up the above position, every devotee has to make a 'Niyat'—a declaration or resolution,—the text of which is as follows:—

"I vow with a sincere heart to perform 2 (3 or 4) rakaats of my morning (Mid'day or evening) prayers purely to God under the leadership of this Imaam and facing towards the 'Kaaba'. Whilst saying "Alla-ho-Akbar" he raises and then folds his hands, and repeats the following text, which is said in the first rakaat only, or in the beginning of each set of prayers.

I extol Thy Holiness, O' Lord!
And praise be to These
Blessed is Thy name
And exalted is Thy Majesty
And there is no deity besides Thee.

After extolling God, the devotee seeks refuge with Him from Satan, who on these particular occasions, does his utmost to cast temptations and evil suggestions into the human heart, in order to lure the devotee away from God and interfere with his devotions. Refuge is sought thus:

I seek refuge with God from (cursed) Satan, driven away with stones.

Then the first chapter from the Quran is recited in every rakaat, which is as follows:—

In the name of God, Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.

All praises are due to God,
The Lord of the worlds.
Most Compassionate, most Merciful.
The Ruler of the Day of Judgement.
Thee do we worship and
Thee do we beseech for help.
Guide us on the right path
The path of those upon whom
Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings
Not of those who have incurred Thy Wrath
Nor of those who have gone astray.
A M E N

After reciting the foregoing first chapter, which must ıe read at the beginning of every subsequent rakaat, any ıortion from the Quran must be read, let us say :—

Chapter 2 Section 22 verse 177.

Righteousness does not lie (only) in turning the face to the East or the West. But righteous is he, who puts his belief in God, and the Last day and the Angels, and all the (revealed)" books and the prophets. For love of Him brings wealth (Pecuniary help) to his kinsfolk, to orphans, the needy and the way-farers, and to those who make an appeal for alms, for the ransom of slaves, and all who are steadfast in their prayers and who contribute legal alms, and fulfil their covenants, when (once) they have covenanted. And those also who are patient in adversity, affliction and at the time of conflict. It is these who truly fear God.

After reciting from memory the above, or any other portion from the Quran, the Imaam (Leader) shouts "Alla-ho-Akbar" (God is the greatest). *Thereupon every one in the congregation takes up the posture of ruku—Bending (see page 64). In this position he repeats the praises of God, three times in the following words :—

* The words in brackets are not included in the text of the Quran, but are introduced to elucidiate the tenor.

*The words "Alla-ho-Akbar" (God is Greatest) are called out loudly when the postures in prayers are to be changed. In large mosques, where the Imaam's voice cannot be heard by the whole congregation, consisting of thousands of people, the 'Moazzan' repeats 'Alla-ho-Akbar' in loud tones after the Imaam. On hearing it every one changes his posture as required.

Holy is my Lord, the Magnificent.
Holy is my Lord, the Magnificent.
Holy is my Lord, the Magnificent.

When every one has repeated the above praise three times the Imaam shouts :—

" God hears him, who praises Him. "

In response to the above the Moazzan cries :—

" O Lord, (all) praises are due to Thee "

Hearing the above, every one stands erect, with his hands at his sides. Immediately the Imaam cries Alla-ho-Akbar. Thereupon every one prostrates himself in the prescribed manner and while prostrated each one again repeats three times the praises to God as follows :—

Holy is my Lord, The Most High.
Holy is my Lord, The Most High.
Holy is my Lord, The Most High.

After repeating the above praises the Imaam again cries " Alla-ho-Akbar " hearing which every one raises his head from the ground and sits up. Again the Imaam shouts "Alla-ho-Akbar" and each one again prostrates himself. *and repeats the above text, *viz:*—

Holy is my Lord, The Most High.
Holy is my Lord, The Most High.
Holy is my Lord, The Most High.

*Thus demonstrating that in saying his prayers a Muslim performs his devotion to his Lord theoretically and practically, His heart is full of emotions and love for Him, with an assured beliefs in His Power and Mercy. His tongue expresses the feeling of gratitude and the praises of His Glory in words and his body indicates reverance, humility and submission in all the various postures.

This concludes the first 'rakaat', after which the Imaam again cries "Alla-ho-Akbar," and stands up to commence the second rakaat, as does the whole congregation. Then the Imam reads from memory the first chapter, which, as has already been said, is read at the beginning of every rakaat *viz:*—

In the name of God, Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.

All praises are due to God,
The Lord of the worlds
Most compassionate, Most Merciful
The Ruler of the Day of Judgement
Thee do we worship, and
Thee do we beseech for help.
Guide us on the right path;
The path of those upon whom
Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings
Not of those who have incurred Thy Wrath
Nor of those who have gone astray.
AMEN ! ! !

After reading the foregoing first chapter the Imaam recites some other portion from the Quran. Let us say chapter II Section 34 verses 254—255.

"O' ye who believe, spend (in the name of God) of that with which we have provided you, before the day comes when there are no purchases, nor friendship nor intercessions, and lo the unbelievers would not heed.

God ! There is no God beside Him, the Ever living The Eternal, Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him, To Him belongeth whatever is in Heaven and on earth. Who

is he who can (dare) intercede with Him, but by His permission. He knows what is happening to them now and what is (to happen) after them. And they can not comprehend any thing from his knowledge, but what He willeth, His throne (rule) extends over the Heavens and the Earth, and the preservation of both is not burdensome to Him. He is the most High, The Magnificent."

After reading the above or any other passage from the "Quran" the postures of 'Ruku' (bending) and sijda (prostration) are performed as described in the first Rakaat. After performing the second "Sijda" they sit in the posture of Qada and every one recites the following text called the Attahiyaat—

"All the adorations uttered by the tongue, the devotions performed by the body, and virtue performed through words, deeds or money, are due to God. Peace be on you Prophet, and the mercy of God and His blessings. Peace be on us and on the righteous servants of God.

Then each devotee raises the index finger of his right hand to emphasise the following testimoney as he reads it. "I bear witness that there is no deity but God, and I testify that Mohammad is His servant and His Apostle."

If the prayer consists of more than two rakaats, the devotee, after reading the above text, stands up to perform the subsequent 'Rakaats.' Otherwise he recites the following "Darood" (blessing sought for Mohammad) which is read only in the last 'rakaat' of every prayer.

"O God have mercy on Mohammad and his descendants as Thou didst have mercy on Abraham and his descendants, surely Thou art Praised and Glorious.

" O, God bless Mohammad and his descendants, as Thou didst bless Abraham and his descendants, surely Thou art praised and great is Thy Majesty.

When all have read the above, the Imaam shouts turning his face to the right.

" *As-salaam alai-kum wa rahmat-ullah* "

i. e. " Peace be on you and the mercy of God."

And then, turning his face to the left, repeats the same sentence. Every one in the congregation follows him in turning his face to the right and to the left. Thus ends the one set of prayer.

The above is called the ' Salaam ' which may be best explained by calling it a departing Salaam, and is performed at the conclusion of every set of prayer.

As on parade, every one has to be attentive from the time he is ordered to ' fall in ' until the command of dismissal. So in the same way, from the moment a devotee makes the declaration of commencing the prayer and folds his hands, until he performs the Salaam, he is directed to imagine himself, with his utmost concentration, to be in the presence of God with his gaze fixed on the spot where his forehead touches the ground in prostration, and therefore he is forbidden to look about him or to speak, neither should he be spoken to, nor should any one cross in front of him, as no living being should come between the worshipper and the worshipped.

When the complete set of prayers is concluded, a devotee raises his open hands looking towards heaven, and with all humility asks blessings from God.



Sijda *Prostration*

To face page 69



Qaada *Sitting*

To face page 71





The Salaam

Turning the face to right

Turning the face to left

To face page 72



Supplications

To face page 78

A Musalman is enjoined to ask for blessings or the future everlasting world, because the dignity, power and wealth of this transcient world are but temporary, and are to be left behind after death. Those who seek only worldly advantages, will be given the same, if it so pleases God, but they will not participate in any share in the next life. The best text of supplication taught in the Quran is as follows :—

" O' God grant us the blessings of this world, and also the blessings of the next world. And protect us from the torments of fire."

The following prayer, called the " Qannoot " is read in the third rakaat of the " Witar " which is recited with the "Isha Prayer."

" O ! God ! We beseech Thy help, and ask forgiveness and believe in Thee, and trust in Thee and extol Thy praises and offer our thanks to Thee, and we are not ungrateful, and we abandon him, who is disobedient to Thee. O Lord it is Thee that we worship, it is to Thee that we pray to and it is before Thee that we prostrate ourselves and to Thee do we flee and are prompt to serve Thee and anticipate Thy Mercy and fear Thy chastisement, because we know that Thy chastisement is bound to overtake the unbelievers.

THE CLASSES OF PRAYER.

The complete set of prayers consists of four different kinds of prayers, i. e. :—

(1) Farz prayer.
(2) Sunnat ,,

(3) Nafil ,,

(4) Witar ,,

(1) Farz prayer = "Farz" signifies duty and the number of rakaats ordained by God is the "Farz prayer" which must be repeated without fail. If a person fails to perform it he shall suffer heavy punishment in the next world.

(2) Sunnat prayer — "Sunnat" means habit or custom. "Sunat prayer" applies to those 'rakaats' which Mohammad performed voluntarily, and ordained that the people should perform them. The performance of them is considered to be meritorious, although the omission is not liable to punishment.

(3) Nafil prayer is recited voluntarily or as an act of supererogation. It is said as a thanks giving that God has enabled or directed the worshippers to perform his duty of his devotions to Him.

(4) **Witar** (Wajib) prayer:—Wajib means expedient. 'Wajib' is next to duty. Witar prayer is supposed, without certainty, to be a Divine Command. Therefore it is considered expedient to repeat them also. Only three rakaats called 'Witar' are 'Wajib' and these are said only with the Isha prayer, it is in the third rakaat of this, that the "Qanut prayer" given in the supplication, is read, (See page 73).

Note (1) :—The words Farz, Sunnat, Wajib and Nafil can also be applied to practices and actions, for example such as fasting, charity and sacrifices and duties to fellow creatures.

Note (2) :—As a matter of fact the prayers, fasts, charity, and sacrifice are disciplinary measures or tests, by ordaining them, God wishes to ascertain whether the people rely with gratitude upon the Almighty Provider or merely strive for his provisions; whether they are grateful and conscious of their duty to their Creator, or are negligent and careless of it, falling victims to the enticements and the temptations of Satan.

If the foregoing prayers are repeated in the orthodox way, as they are prescribed and ordained, with a sincere heart, complete devotions, and perfect contemplation, one is confident of obtaining one's salvation and achieving the glorious destiny of entering God's heaven.

The acceptance of prayers raises the humblest creature towards supremity, and transforms belief into certainty. Prayers and devotions keep every human being in touch with his Creator, as he has to stand before Him five times a day, or more if he chooses to do so. Thus he sustains definite hope of salvation and enjoys the means of direct communion and communication with Him.

Should his prayers not be acceptable, it signifies that his connection with his Creator is not maintained on a sound basis, and his credulity or misbelief may be responsible for it. Idolatory, polytheism, reprobation, want of contemplation, all or any of these reasons may sever his connection with God. Therefore his beliefs must be strengthened and his actions ammended.

This may better be explained and understood by the following illustration. Let us imagine the heart of a person to be an electric bulb, God the repository for the

electric energy, and the beliefs and devotions the connecting wires; the bulb, or the heart, should be lighted up as soon as the connection is established. If there is no light, the defect must be located either in the bulb or in the wires. First of all the heart should be tested to see if it is free from all impurities, due to misbeliefs or wrong behaviour. The tears of humble supplications and the sobs of sincere repentance are the best lotion for the cleansing of the heart. Likewise the faulty wires of devotions may be remedied by meditation and good actions. By these means a man can establish or reinstate his connections with the Supreme Being, enabling him to sustain the Divine Light in his heart—which will lead him safely to salvation.

REPENTANCE.

Forgiveness for sincere repentance, the result of the firm determination to amend one's belief and actions, is open to the whole world. With no hope of repentance human beings would become desperate and indulge in ever increasing vices, resembling Satan,—to whom all the doors of repentance and forgiveness are closed. Repentance is acceptable only when it is offered whilst the person concerned is physically fit to commit sins, and not when so ill that he has no hope of recovery or is about to die. Then repentance is too late.

EXTRACT FROM THE QURAN

PART V. CHAPTER XVII VERSES 18—39

18. Whosoever covets the present transitory life
We readily grant this unto him
But that which we decide
And unto those whom we select,
But hereafter we allot unto him the Hell,
Wherein He shall enter scorned and rejected.

19. And whosoever longs for the future Eternal Life
And strives worthily for it, with ordained endeavour
And is also a believer
It is these people
Whose efforts will meet with great reward.

20. Unto all we grant likewise
To all people equally
From the bounties of Thy Lord
And the favours of thy Lord are not restricted.

21. Perceive how we have granted unto some
Supremacy over others (in this world)
But the Eternal Life is more desirable
In respect of higher status
And of greater eminence.

22. Thou shalt not associate with God
Any other deity (whatsoever)
For in that case, shalt thou sit
Condemned and forsaken.

23. For thy Lord hath commended
That Ye shall worship none but Him
And be of good behaviour to thy parents
Whether the one of them, or both of them
Attain to old age with thee
So do not say unto them
(Even as much as) 'Fie on you'
And do not be discourteous unto them
But address them with gentle words

24. And bow down thy shoulders in obeisance to them
Out of loving kindness, and say
O Lord! 'Have mercy on them
Even as they cherished me a (helpless) babe.

25. Thy Lord knows what is in thy heart.
If thou art dutiful,
Then surely is He forgiving unto those
Who repent sincerely.

26. (Blessed is) he who gives of his goods,
As ordained, to his kin
And to the needy and the wayfarer
And doth not squander wastefully

27. For surely the prodigals are akin to Satan
And Satan is ungrateful to his Lord.

28 And if you (have to) turn your face
From them (the poor and needy)
Whilst (your self) seeking the gift
Of the Divine bounty (which you anticipate)
Then tell them (so) in soft words.

29. And let not your hand be tied up to your neck.
Nor stretch it out to its fullest extent,*
Lest you sit reprehended and sighing.

30. Surely thy Lord provides ample sustenance
Unto whom he desires
And likewise ordains the measure.
For surely is He well aware of
And watches His creatures.

31. Forbear from the destruction of your children
From the stress of poverty,
For We (The God) are the provider of sustenance
Unto them and unto you
And surely to deprive them of life
Is a mortal sin.

32. And go not nigh to fornication
For verily it is an abomination, and an evil course

33. And God hath forbidden thee to slay any man
Unless for a just cause (punishment)
For one who is slain with unjust malice
We have entitled just retaliation
Unto his next of kin
But He must not be unduly excessive
In the taking of life
And surely will he be granted help (in his avenge)

34. And do not betake unto yourself
The property of an orphan

* This signifies in his first place abstaining from charity and secondly to the improvident giving of alms.

Except in good faith (tor his advantage)
And until the orphan attains the age of discretion.
And when under an obligation,
Be very sure you acquit yourself,
For surely the obligations will be accounted for

35. When you measure, give full measurement
And weigh with even scales.
It is a virtue and meritorious is the reward.

36. *And do not lend your voice to slander
Of which you have no knowledge.
Your ears, your eyes and your heart; all of these
Will certainly be called to accounts regarding this.

37. And do not walk on earth
With undue exultation
For surely you can not rend this earth asunder
Neither can you attain height of the mountains.

38. All these evils are detestable
In the sight of thy Lord.

39. And these precepts have been revealed unto you
From the wisdom (and mighty judgement) of thy Lord
And you shall not associate with God
Any other deity
If you do so, you will be thrown in the Hell
Blamed and discarded.

*Lending one's voice or even ears to calumny, slander or scandal is ordained by these verses to be a mortal sin. The violator of the above command is held responsible as the originator of these transgressions. As likewise is the receiver of stolen property legally condemned as an associate of the thief in the crime.

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